7
Liebzlaff
ETOROUJI SHIONO
PARENTAL ADVISORY
WARNING
EXPLICIT CONTENT

ÜbelBlatt

Bilgald
Balgrume
Drachengraf schaft Lodien
Jezzelon
Kvilkzen
Ziglid

Frigyat
Tabatia
Kurtuzcentum
Isaakinia
Barcschada

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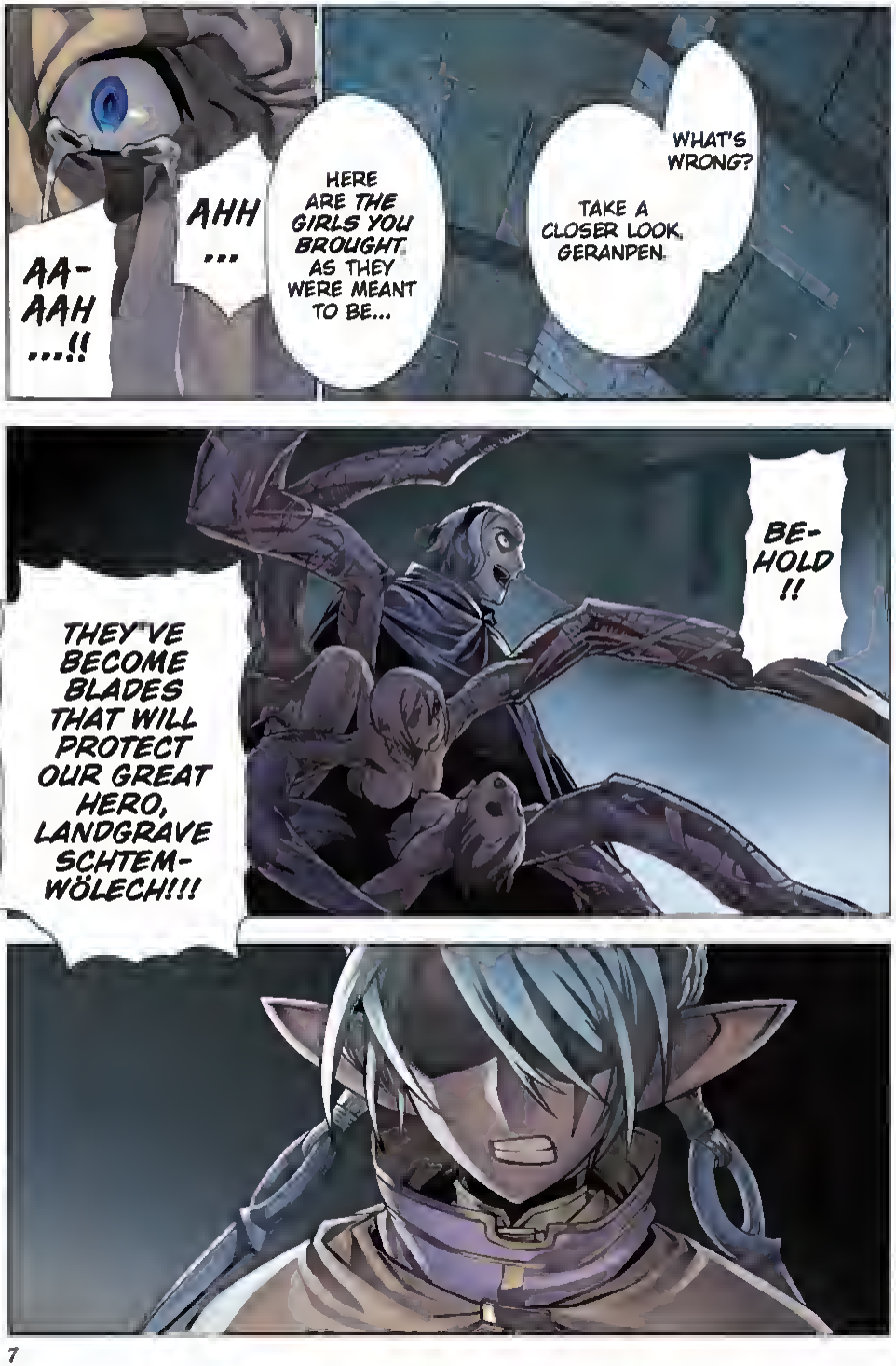
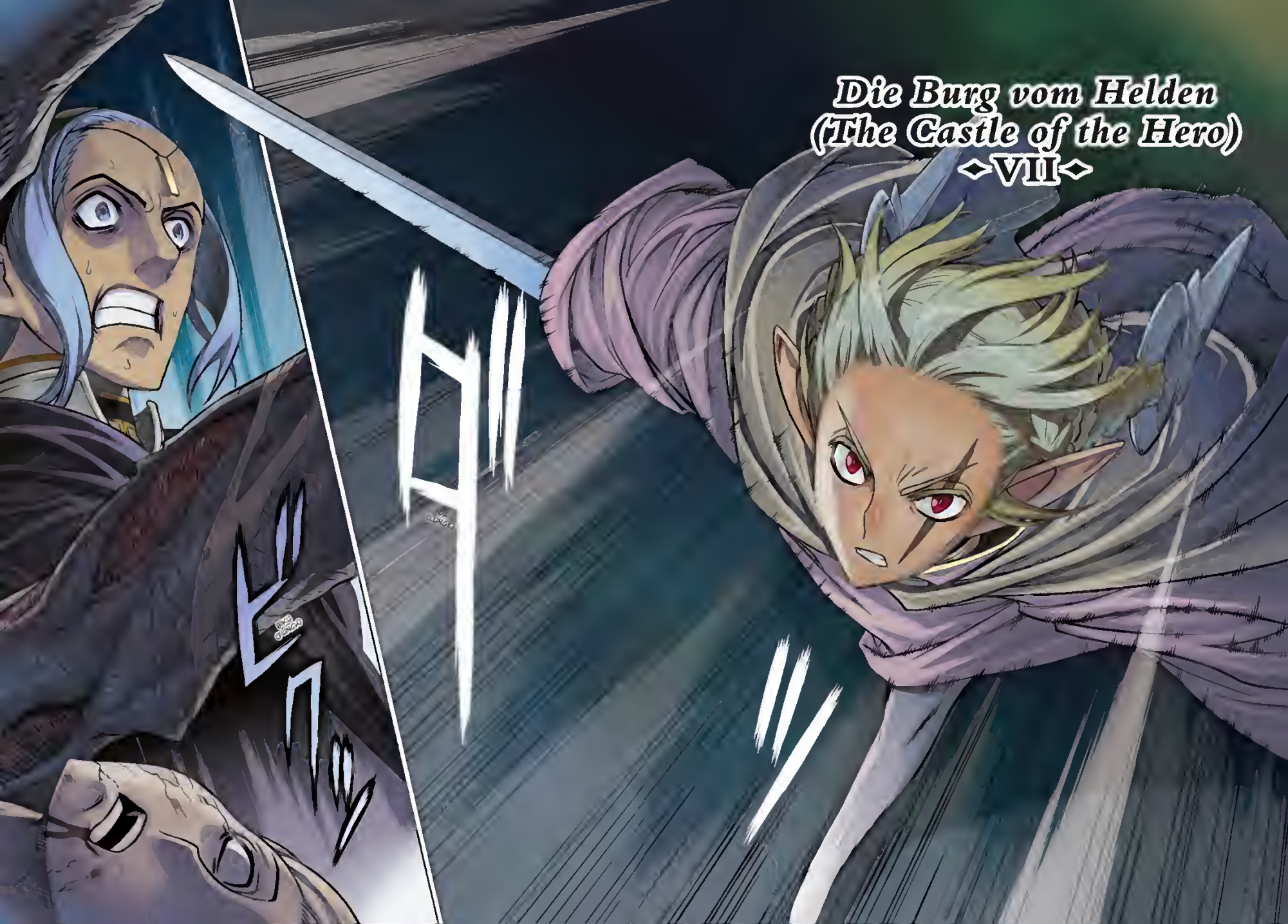

AA-AAH ...!!
AHH ...
HERE ARE THE GIRLS YOU BROUGHT, AS THEY WERE MEANT TO BE...
TAKE A CLOSER LOOK, GERANPEN.
WHAT'S WRONG?
BE-HOLD !!
THEY'VE BECOME BLADES THAT WILL PROTECT OUR GREAT HERO, LANDGRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH!!!


Die Burg vom Helden
(The Castle of the Hero)
-VII-

ガシャ
(GRRCH)
……
NII
(SMIRK)
ニィッ

KEH HEH...
HEH HEH HEH HEH...
TOO PREDICT-ABLE... I HAVE A FEEL FOR IT NOW...
KEH KEH... WHAT'S THIS...?
YOU'RE NOT SO TOUGH AFTER ALL...
KEH-KEH-HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH...
.....

KAH-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA!!!
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
GA
CRSHHHD
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HAH!!!

WHY NOT BRING THAT OUT!?
CAN'T MANAGE TO PUT UP A DECENT FIGHT!?
WHAT'S WRONG!?
GIIN (CLANG)
ZAZAZA (SKSH)

...I DON'T DO WELL WHEN I CAN'T SEE THE SKY.
LIKE I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU...
THIS GUY'S TOUGH...
WHY AREN'T YOU USING THE BLACK SWORD, KÖINZELL!?

IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH MOON-LIGHT...
... USING THAT ...
...IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.
GAGYA (KRAKOOM)
WHOA!!!

WIED !!
DA
DAMN THIS GUY.....
HE'S FAST!
!?
!
DA

GAKIN (KSHING)
HMPH!
A PINCER ATTACK, IS IT?

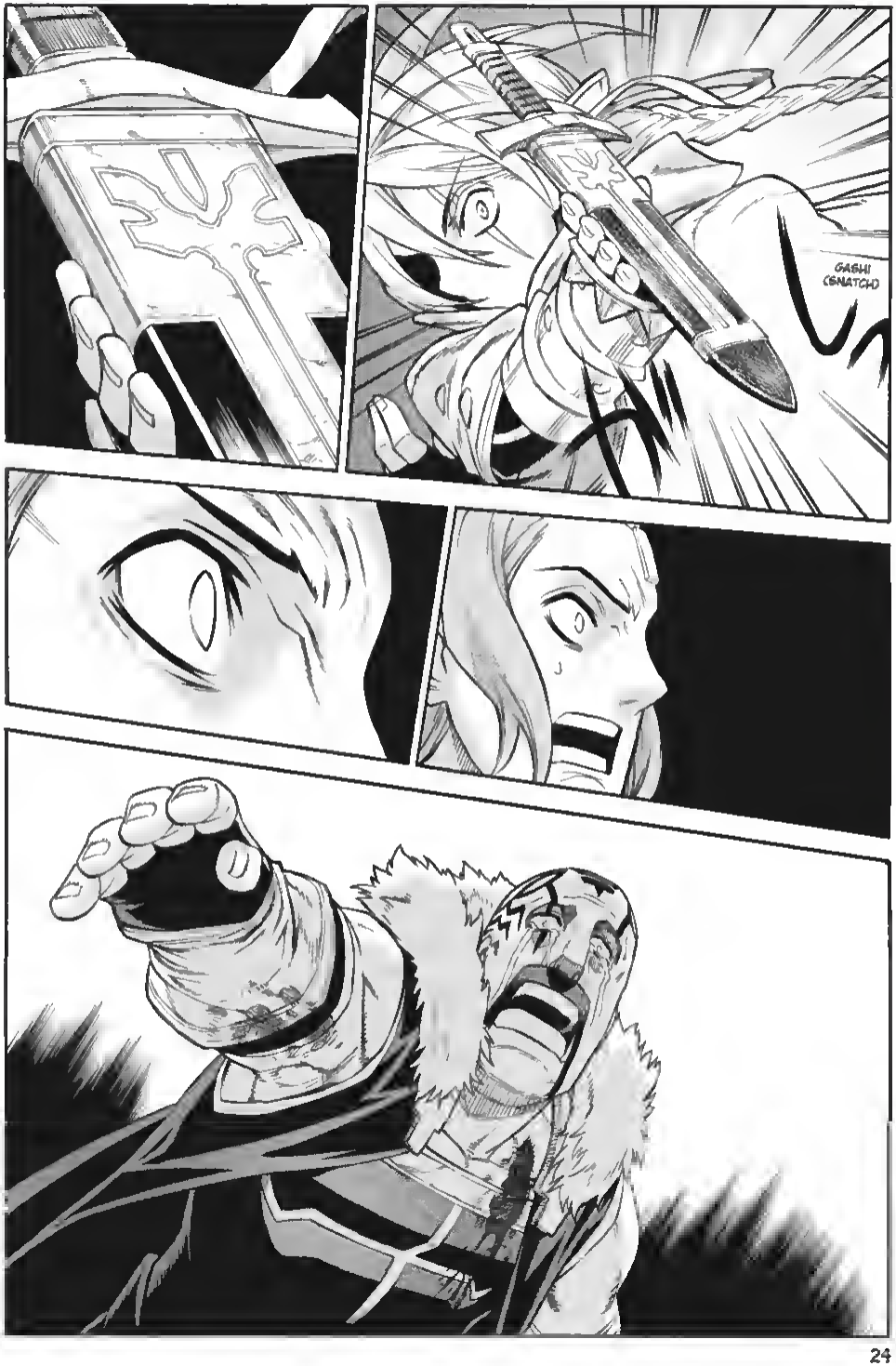
!!
TCH ...!!!
THEY'RE TRYING TO DIVIDE MY ATTENTION THREE WAYS...!

BUT...
...TOO SLOW!
!!!

TCH!
KÖINZELL!!
NOW DIE!!
!!
GHIIN (KLANG)

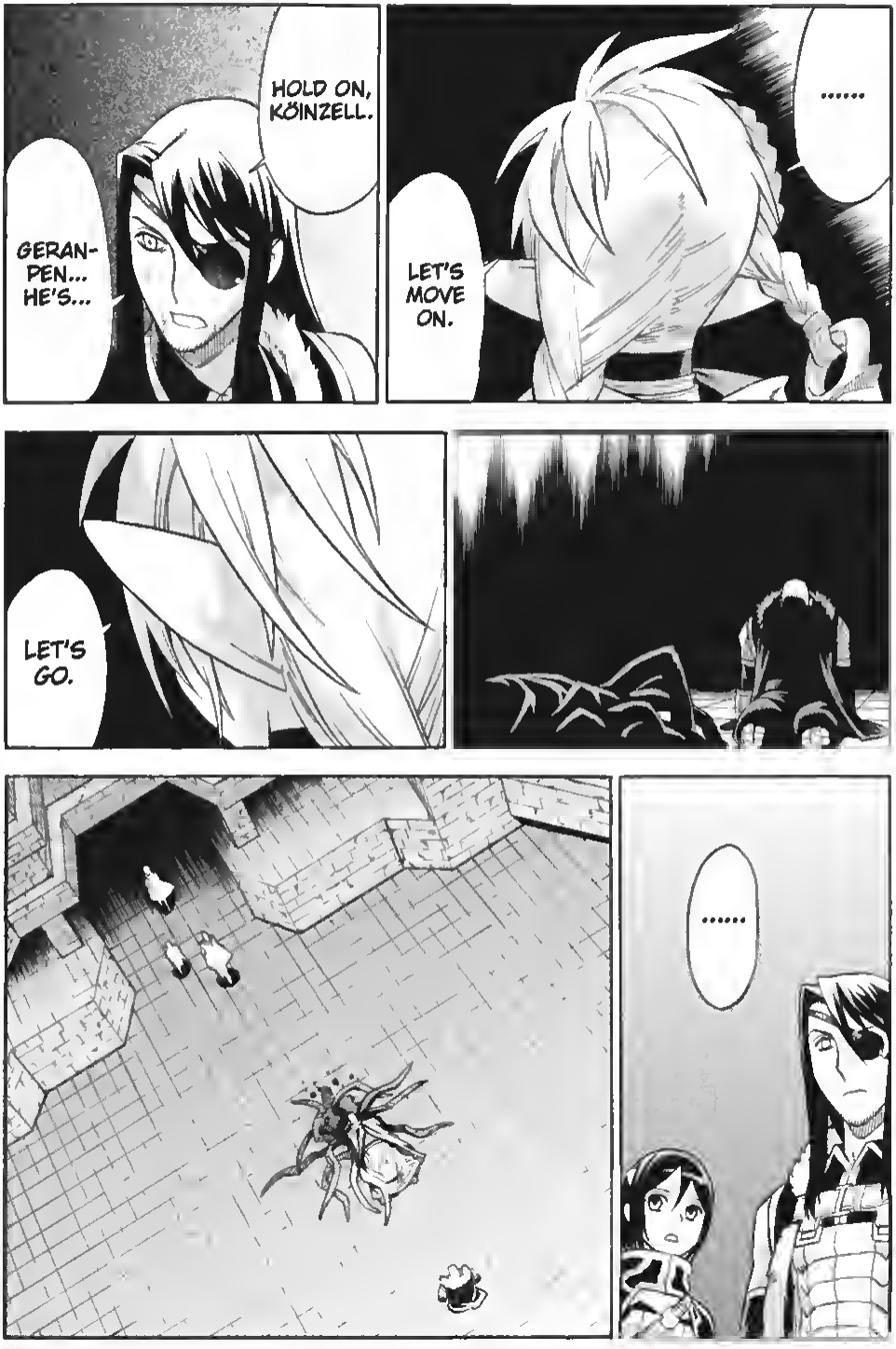
GA GSHINKO
IT'S ALL OVER.
HA HAA!

KÖIN-
ZELL,
HERE
!!!
!


GASHI
(SNATCH)

GERAN-
PENNN!!!

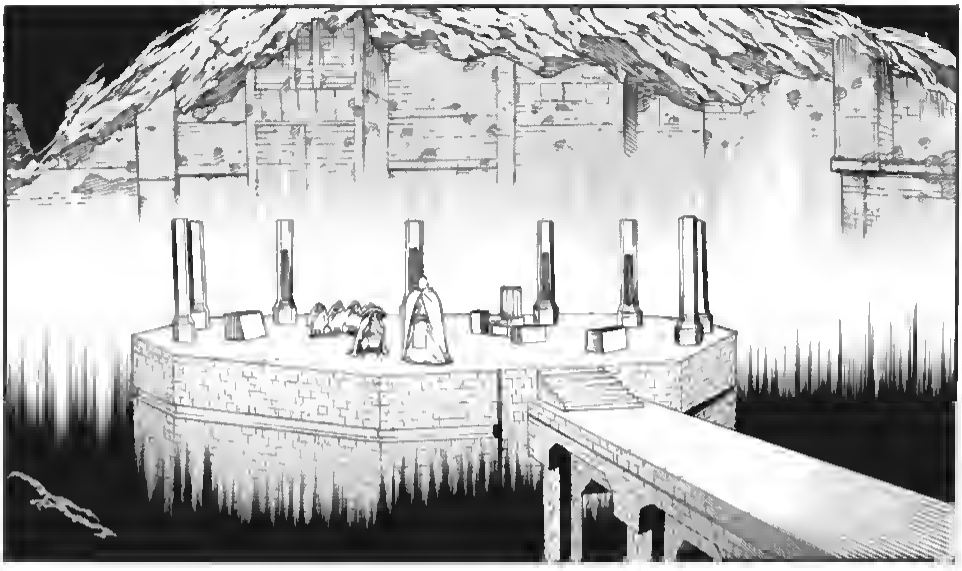
DOSHA (SPLAT)
KOIN-ZELL!


HOLD ON, KÖINZELL.
GERAN-PEN... HE'S...
.....
LET'S MOVE ON.
LET'S GO.
.....

HA-HA! LOOKIT 'EM ASCHERIT.
THESE GUYS...THEY WERE SAYIN' THEIR PRAYERS YESTERDAY, BUT TODAY...

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE DONE HERE.
LET'S GET BACK TO GLENN AND THE OTHERS QUICK-LIKE.
YEAH.
YOU LOOK LIKE A WHOLE NEW MAN, SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
HUH?
.....
FOR A SECOND, YOU LOOKED LIKE MORE THAN JUST SOME ROTTEN BANDIT.
WHA— YOU!
YOU MAKIN' FUN OF ME, ASCHERIT!?

Schtemwölech
I



ARE YOU WORRIED, MY LORD?
ABOUT WHAT?
THE REBELS SEEM TO HAVE ADVANCED QUITE FAR...

.....
SHOULD WE GO BACK AND CHECK?
SIR FARGO'S BATTLE WITH THE INTRUDERS, I MEAN...
I WONDER HOW IT'S GOING.
NO NEED TO PANIC...
HMPH ...
...I UNDERSTAND WE'VE FOUND QUITE THE RARE SPECIMEN.
MORE IMPOR-TANTLY ...
FARGO WILL RETURN WITH THEIR HEADS ANY MINUTE NOW.

IT SEEMS SUCH A CREATURE IS BORN ONCE IN A BLUE MOON IN KSCHARLUNDO...
INDEED...
BLACK-HAIRED DEMI-HUMANS ARE UNUSUAL .....
OHH...

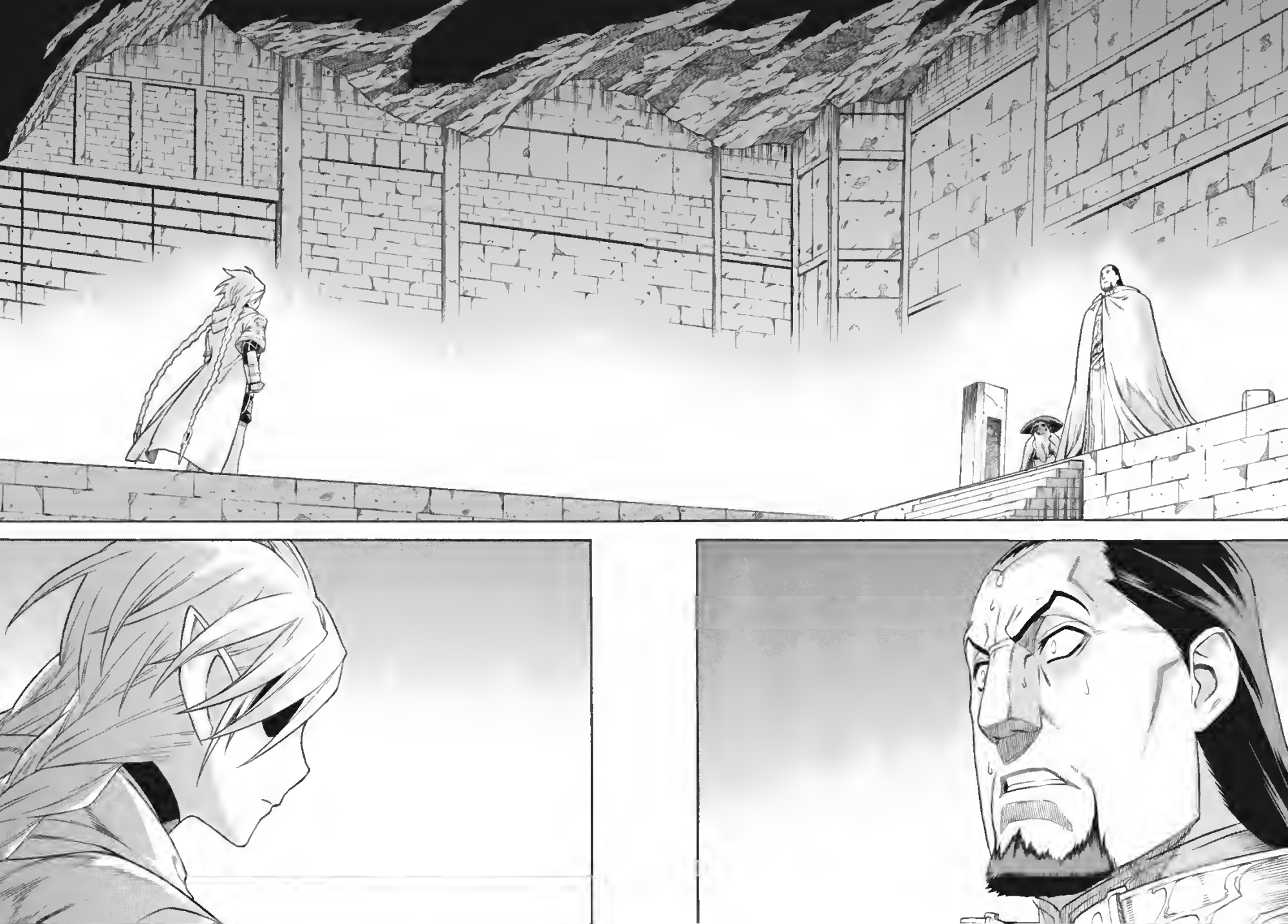
THEIR PHYSICAL BODIES ARE NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF ORDINARY HUMANS.
BUT THE POWER OF THEIR FAIRY BLOOD IS INCREDIBLY STRONG.
THIS ONE'S BODY AND BLOOD MAKE HER THE ULTIMATE HYBRID.
IT SHOULD GIVE US ALL THE ANSWERS WE SEEK...
...AS WELL AS YOUR TRUE DESIRE, LAND-GRAVE...
WE'LL HAVE IT SOON...
HEH... WILL WE, NOW...!
BUT... ... LOOKING AT HER...
...SHE'S HARDLY THE IMAGE OF A BORDER BARBARIAN.
SHE'S QUITE A BEAUTY, IN FACT.
WHAT A SHAME...

LAND-GRAVE.....
YES.....OF COURSE...
GET TO IT.
STUDY AND RESEARCH TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.
TO THE LAST SLICE OF FLESH.
TO THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD...!
UNDER-STOOD.

GNOYAAAAH!!!
!!?

...GH!
UGYA-AAH!!!
LAND-GRAVE... HELP US...
FARGO .....
THAT USELESS BASTARD .....!!!

EEEE! LAND-GRAVE!?
DON'T...
...DON'T PANIC! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR...!
H-HMPH. INDEED... THIS...
...THIS REBEL SCUM POSES NO REAL THREAT...



.....
YOU'VE AGED... SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
.....?
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!?
THIS IS MY...
THIS IS THE HEROIC LAND-GRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH'S CASTLE...!!
WH-WHO ARE YOU...?

.....
I KNOW IT WELL...
AH...
AHH...
AH...
AAAA-AAAA-AAAH!!

A
Hị
AAAA
AAAA
AAAA
AAA

SIS-
TER!
SCHA-
REN!!
HE'S
NOT
ALONE
!?
WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING
!?
DON'T
LET
THEM
INTER-
FERE!!
YES,
SIR!
DAMN
...
TURN
ON THE
LIGHTS!!

UWAH ...
WAAA-AAAA-AAH!!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS!?
LAND-GRAVE... WHAT HAVE YOU...
...BEEN DOING HERE!!?
I SEE YOU BAS-TARDS...
YOU'RE AFTER THE KSCHAR-LUNDIAN GIRL.....
FOOLS... IGNORANT BARBAR-IANS!

I AM...
...SCHTEM-WÖLECH! ONE OF THE HEROES WHO SAVED THE EMPIRE!
I DESERVE YOUR PRAISE! YOUR GRATITUDE! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT...
NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE ME!!!
THIS GIRL IS ABOUT TO BECOME THE KEY-STONE...
...TO EVER-LASTING GLORY FOR YOUR HEROIC LAND-GRAVE...
IN FACT, THIS WILL BE A BLESSING UPON—
SHUT UP...
THAT'S ENOUGH...

...YOU'VE FALLEN SO FAR...
I SEE...
SCHTEM-WÖLECH... YOU'VE...

Schtemwölech

◆II◆

!!
ARRRRGH!!
GYAAAH!!
SCHA-REN!!
SIS!!!
DOSHU (THUD)

SCHA-
REN!!!
GAKIN (KLANK)
TCH...
S-
SISTER
!!
GAKU
AH...
NH...
AH...
GAKU
GAKU (TREMBL)

LAND-GRAVE !!!
KNH...
Y-YOU FOOLS...
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT A BLUNDER YOU'VE MADE!?
TURNING AGAINST ME FOR THE SAKE OF ONE SUBHUMAN GIRL...!?

...WHO SAVED YOU FOOLS FROM WISCHTECH YET STILL ...!!
I'M THE ONE...
.....
SCHTEM-WÖLECH... YOU...
BACK THEN, YOU...
EVEN IF JUST FOR A MOMENT...

YOU REALLY...
...FOUGHT BRAVELY TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE...
WHAT .....
...WHAT IS IT ABOUT HIM...?
WHY...
...WHY DOES HE LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT...!?
LOOK-ING AT ME, THE HEROIC LAND-GRAVE...
...WITH THOSE EYES...!
WHY DO THEY PIERCE ME AS THEY DO...!?

SCHTEM-
WÖLECH...
...THE
SINS...
...YOU'VE
COMMITTED
SINCE THAT
DAY.....
!?

I'VE COME TO PUT AN END TO THEM...!
ビクッ
BIKU (SHUDDER)

HA
DA
CLINGED
LAND-
GRAVE
!!!

TA CTMD
A
WHAT !!?
ITSUSHA TSUKOSHO

THE WAY HE MOVED...
WHAT THE HELL ...?
HE DODGED !!?
HNH!?
BYUO (WHOOSH)
GHIIN (CLANG)

ZUZAZAZA (SKSHHHH)
GAGI (GRNCH)
.....
BIRI (RATTLE)
BIRI
BIRI

.....
...FOR SOMEONE WHO BEAT FARGO...
...YOU'RE STILL LACKING ...
FWOOO...
HEH HEH...
YOU'RE PRETTY QUICK.
BUT I MUST SAY...

LADY AHT!
I'M GONNA LOOK FOR A WAY OUT!
WIED! TAKE CARE OF MY SISTER!
KÖIN-ZELL...

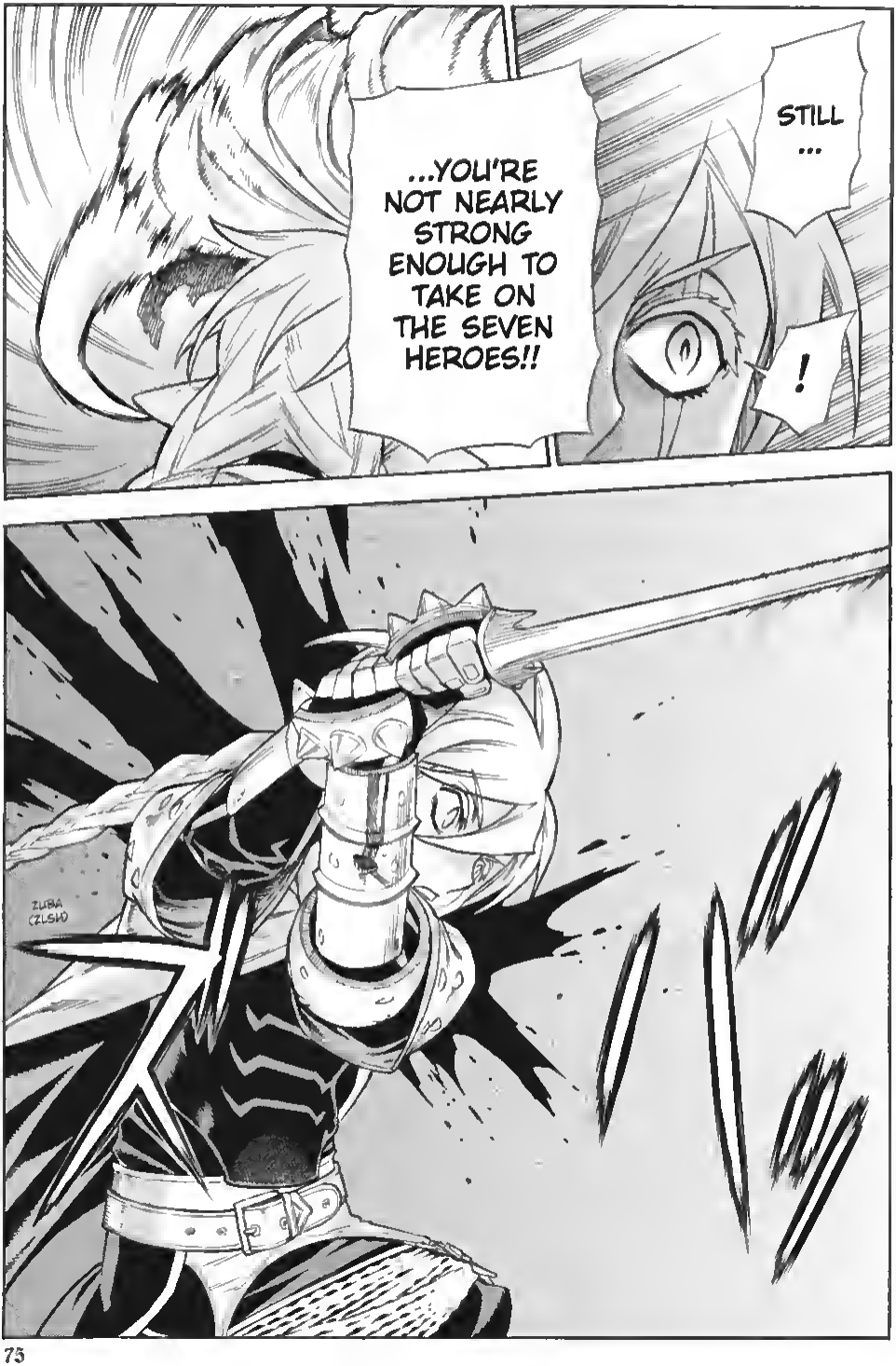
L-LAND-GRAVE...
DO NOT FEAR.
HE'S JUST ONE WOUNDED... CHILD-CREATURE...
TIME TO FACE THE JUDGMENT OF THE HEROIC LAND-GRAVE.....
...YOU FILTHY REBEL!
YES...!
!
...JUST IN CASE, YOU'D BEST GO AND PREPARE THEM.
EVEN SO...
NOW...
...I BELIEVE IT'S MY TURN...

YOU WILL TASTE THE BLADE OF ONE OF THE SEVEN HEROES WHO SAVED THE EMPIRE.....
YOU SHOULD FEEL HON-ORED ...!!
SA CVWSHO

!?
SYU (SLASH)
TAN (TMP)
GA (GSH)
GUH!!

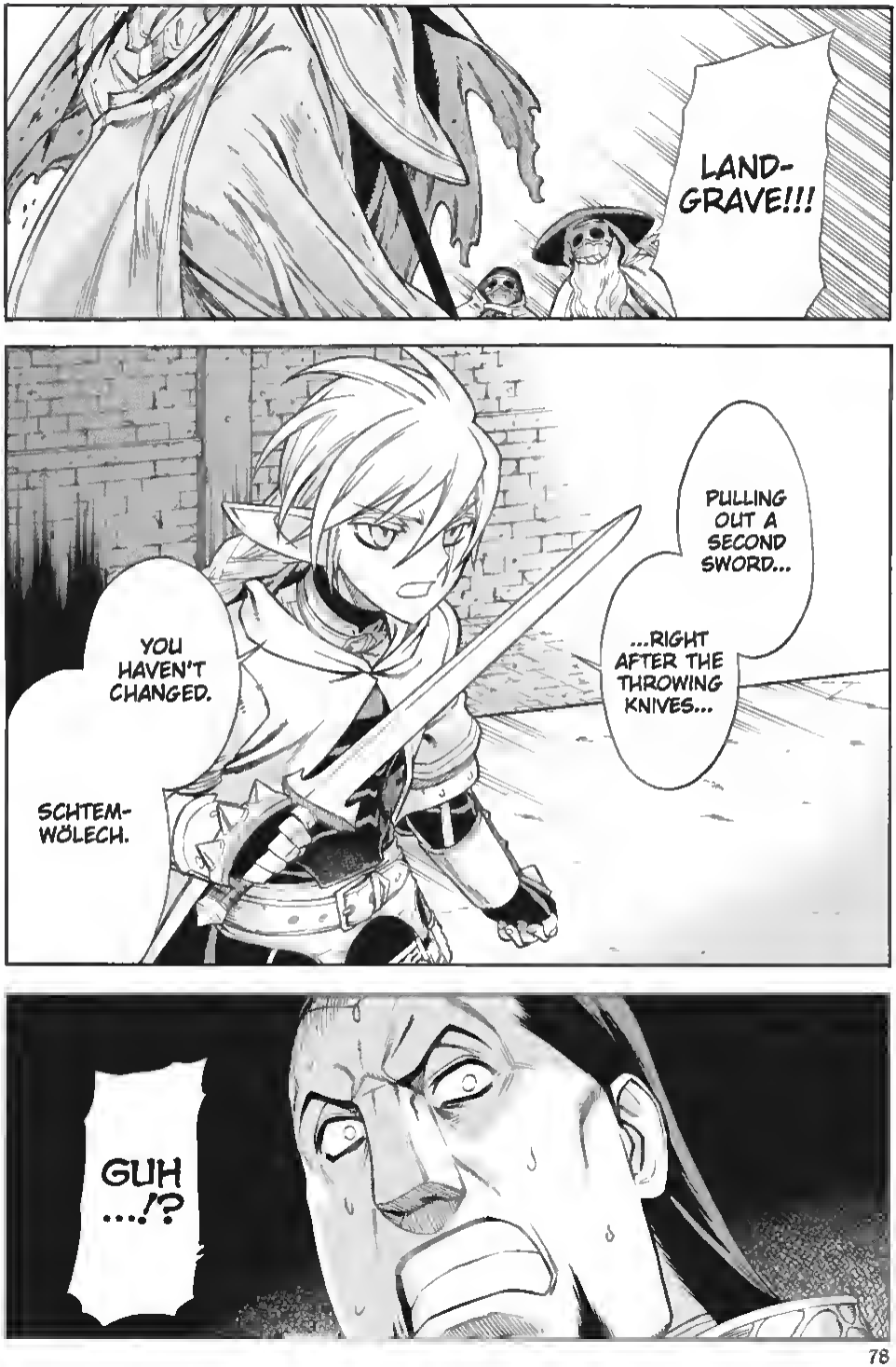
GA
GA
GA
GA
RUNNING AROUND ISN'T GOING TO BE ENOUGH TO KILL A HERO...
HA-HA... WHAT'S THE MATTER .....?

GA
GA
GA


STILL ...
!
...YOU'RE NOT NEARLY STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE ON THE SEVEN HEROES!!
ZUBA CZLSW

KÖIN-ZELL!?
GUH...!!
...I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE YOU SEEM TO BE SLOWING DOWN...
WHAT'S MORE...

I COULDN'T DODGE AFTER I LANDED MY BLOW...
SHIT...
I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR ME TO END THIS.....
!?
BA (SPRT)
GWAAAAH!!?


LAND-GRAVE!!!
PULLING OUT A SECOND SWORD...
...RIGHT AFTER THE THROWING KNIVES...
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.
SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
GUH ...!?

Schtemwölech
III
DA
(LUNGE)
RAAA-
AAAA-
AAH!!!
HE'S
FAST!

BUT...
ZA CZŁASH

BUBA (SPLRSH)
GWA-AAAA-AAAH!!?
YOUR STYLE IS THE SAME...
...SCHTEM-WÖLECH.

NNNGH!!
GAKU (SLUMP)
LAND-GRAVE!?
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, FOOLS!?
HURRY NOW!!

...IS THIS BRAT FROM THE BORDER-LANDS SO SKILLED...?
HOW...
HOW IS HE...?
DAMN YOU...
YORO- (STAGGER)
UNNH ...
DAMN YOU...
AND YOU STILL MAKE A MAD RUSH WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY...
NWA-AAA-AAH!!!

GA
GA
GA

GU-
GYA-
AAA-
AAH
!!?
DOPA (BLOOSH)
!!
GAKU (SLUMP)
GUH..
DA (DASH)
ZUZAZA (SKSHH)

BIKU CLINCH!!
HIGH PRIEST !!
...IS HE READING MY MOVES SO WELL!?
HOW.....
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WE'VE USED ALL THOSE FAIRY GIRLS TO FORTIFY MY LIMBS...
...SO WHY AM I BLEED-ING!?

KÖIN-
ZE—

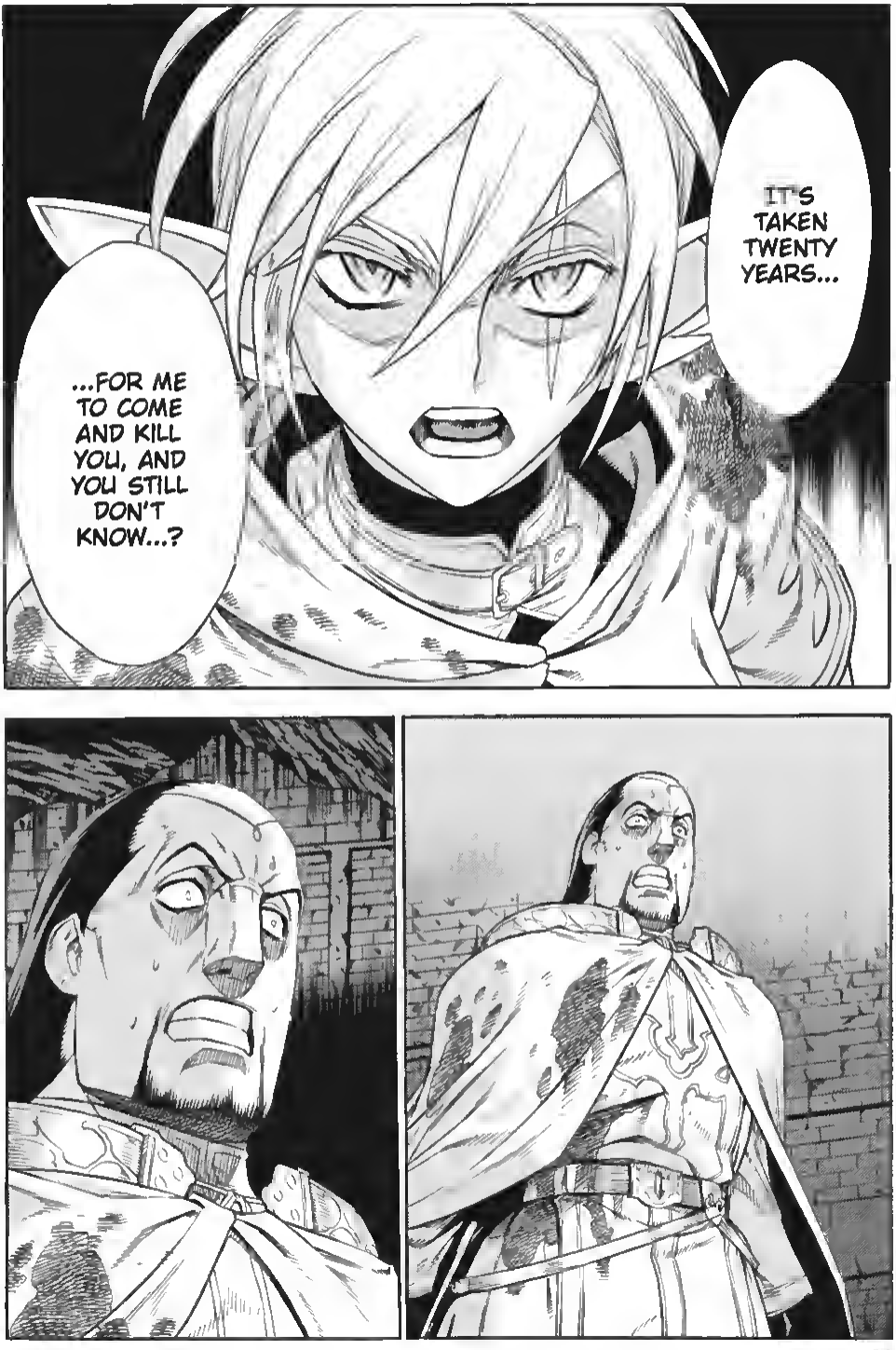
!
BA
OSLSHO
GIIIIIN
OKLANG!

DAMN YOU!!!
.....
GATA (TREMBLE)
カタカタカタ
GATA
GATA

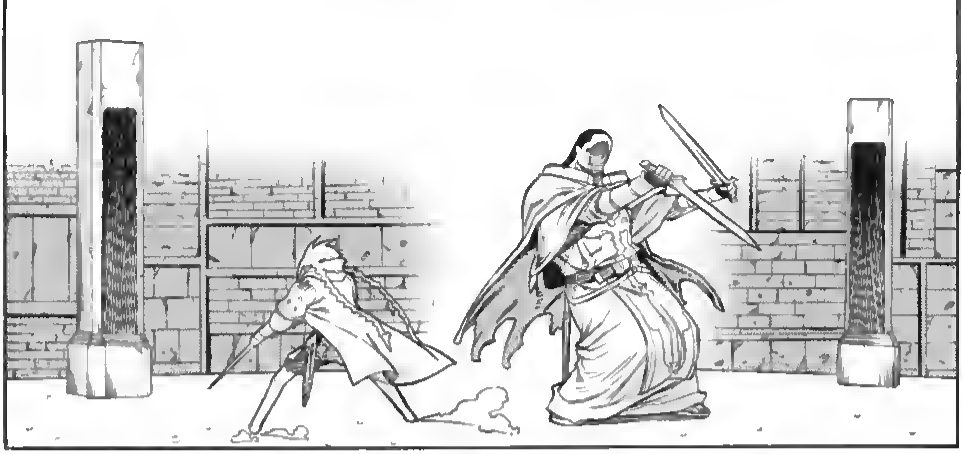
!!
I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE ...
THIS BRAT'S FIGHT-ING STYLE...
HIS MOVE-MENTS ...
!

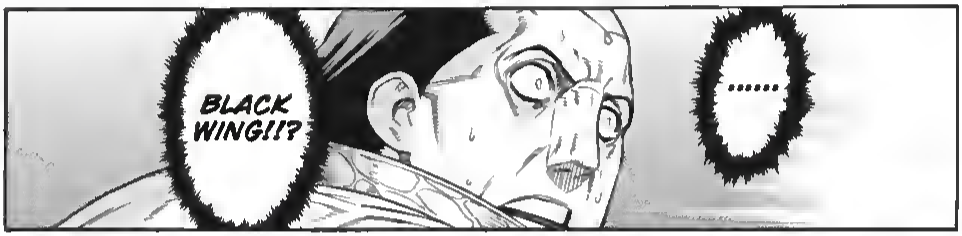
ZAZA
CZLSW

HFF!
HFF!
HFF!
.....
HUFF!
HFF!
THAT STYLE ...
HFF!
HAFF!
THAT STYLE ...!
YOU...
WHERE DID YOU LEARN ...!!?
STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT WHO I AM...
...SCHTEM-WÖLECH?


IT'S TAKEN TWENTY YEARS...
...FOR ME TO COME AND KILL YOU, AND YOU STILL DON'T KNOW...?

SCHTEMWÖLECH...
!!!



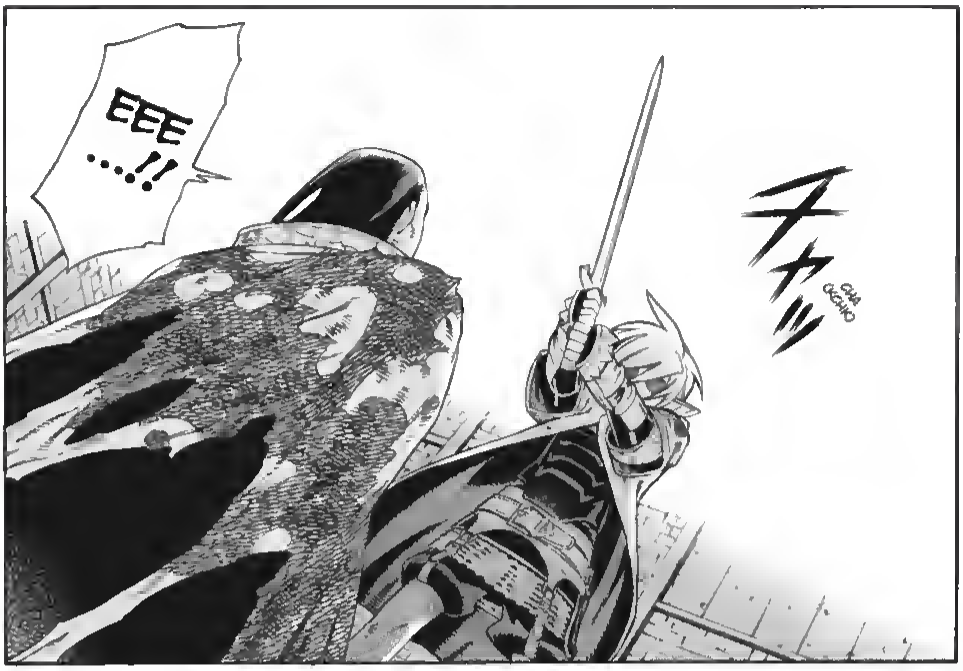

BLACK WING!!?
.....

GUGAAAAH!!!

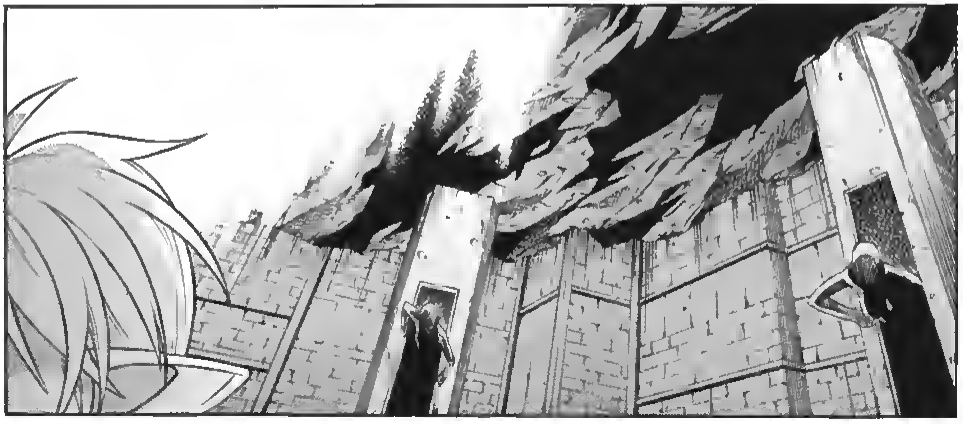
AH...
ZUSHA (SHLUNK)
GAH...
.....
RIGHT. THIS BODY CAN'T QUITE HANDLE THAT.....
KNH...

...
YOU'RE SUP-POSED TO BE DEAD ...!!!
YOU... CAN'T ...
YOU...
GORU (SPLAT)
AS GLENN TOOK MY LEFT EYE...
...YOU REACHED OUT FROM BEHIND THEM AND CUT OFF MY RIGHT ARM...
... SCHTEM-WÖLECH.

ASCHERI!!!


EEE ...!!
CHA
GCHIKO

THE OTHER SIX WILL JOIN YOU SOON ENOUGH.....!



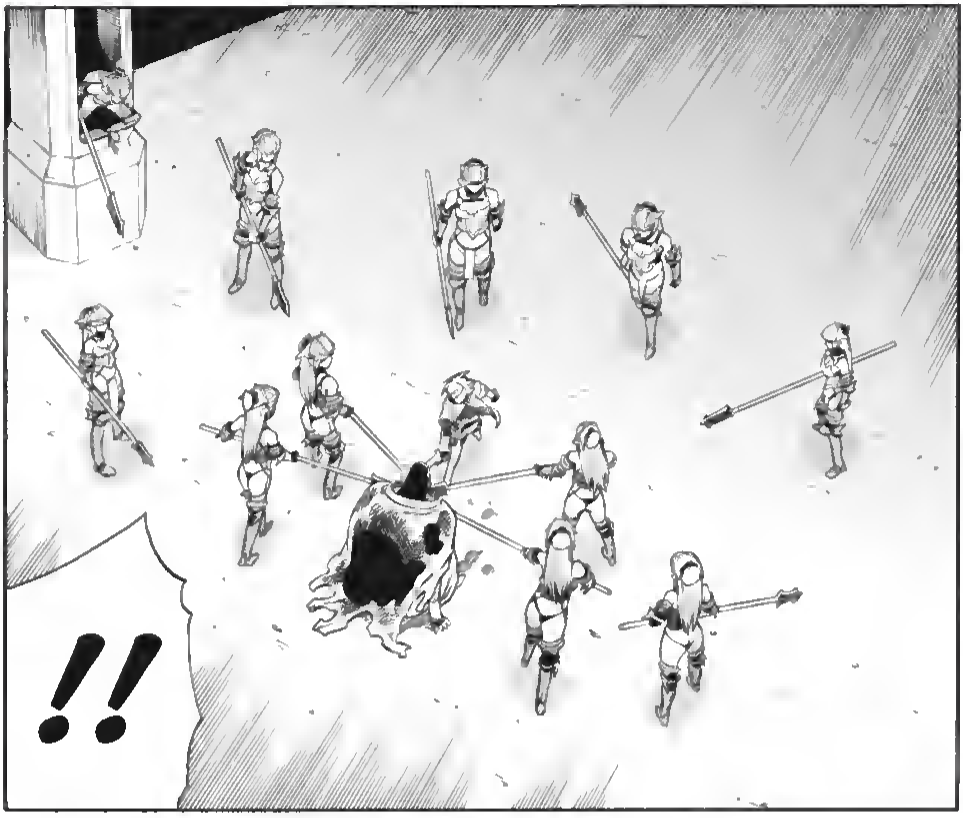
KÖIN-ZELL IS.....
...THE TRAI-TOROUS LANCE ASCHER-IIT...!!?
Ascheriit
Schtemwölech
IV

ZURI (SHFF)
HOW ARE YOU STILL .....!?
ZURI
YOU CAN'T ...
HOW ...?
... NO ...
BACK THEN, DEEP IN THE FOREST OF DEATH...
...THE SEVEN OF US CARVED YOU UP! I THOUGHT WE'D KILLED YOU.....!

SO HOW ARE YOU.....
...STILL ALIVE!!?
HE'S STILL UP AFTER TAKING A HIT FROM MY BLACK WING...
THAT'S SOME BODY...
HOW-EVER...
GU (GRIP)
...THIS NEXT STRIKE WILL END IT...!

SCHTEMWÖLECH!!

!!?
GAGIN
(KACLANG)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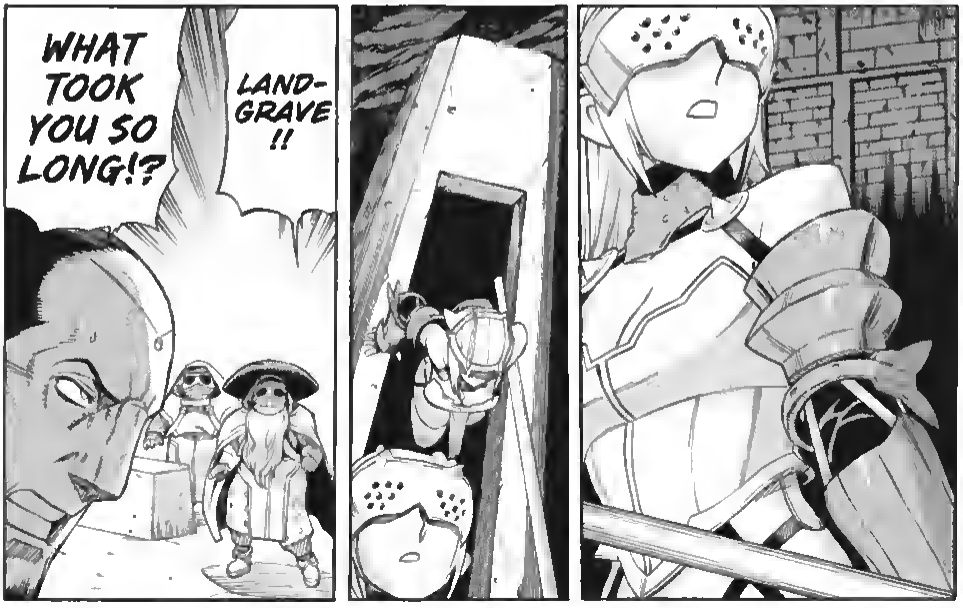
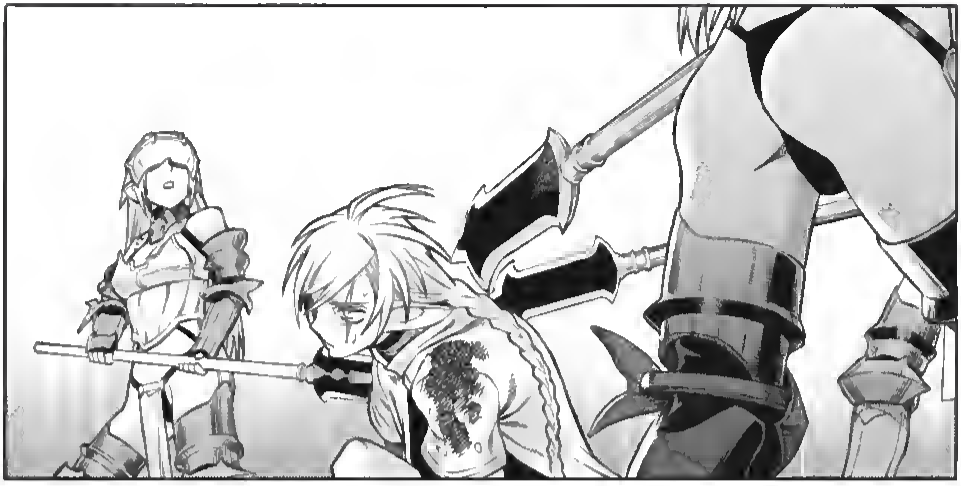
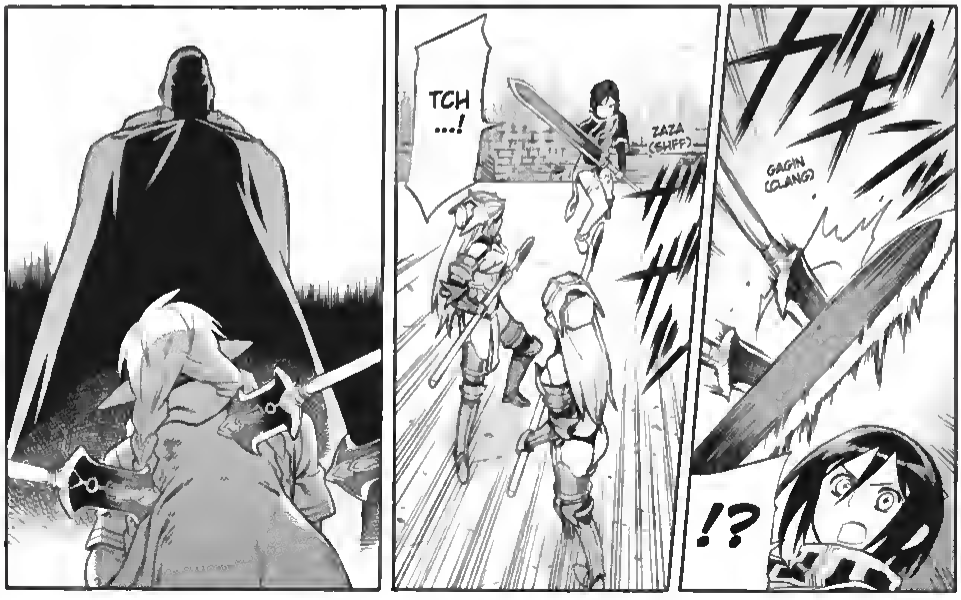

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG!?
LAND-GRAVE !!

.....
...!
?
HIGH PRIEST ...
...DON'T KILL HIM...!

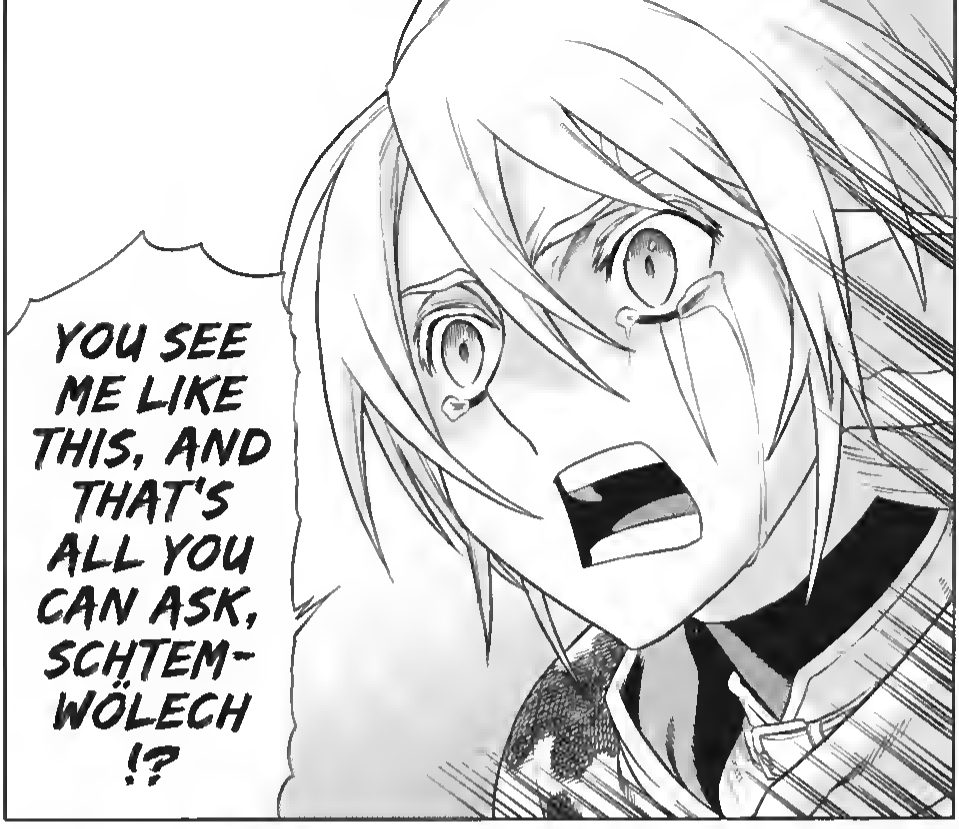


KÖIN-
ZELL!!
TOO DRAINED TO FIGHT ANY-MORE...
SHIT...


TCH ...!
ZAZA (SHFF)
GAGIN (CLANG)
!?

.....!?
KEH KEH KEH...
...TELL ME, ASCHERIIT...
WHAT ARE YOU, EXACTLY...?
THAT FORM...
... SCHTEM-WÖLECH ...?
...HOW IS IT YOU APPEAR SO YOUNG ...!?
TWENTY WHOLE YEARS HAVE PASSED, AND YET...

WHAT SECRET ART HAVE YOU USED!? HOW DID YOU DO IT...?
WHICH RACE HAS GIRLS WHOSE FLESH AND BLOOD...
...WILL GIVE ME A BODY LIKE YOURS !!?
.....
ANSWER ME, ASCHER-IIT!!!
... SCHTEM-WÖLECH ...
...TO HAVE MY REVENGE ON YOU... ON YOU SEVEN...
...I'VE SPENT TWENTY YEARS ADJUSTING TO THIS BODY...


YOU SEE ME LIKE THIS, AND THAT'S ALL YOU CAN ASK, SCHTEM-WÖLECH !?

WE'VE FOUND THE ULTIMATE RESEARCH SPECIMEN.
REJOICE, HIGH PRIEST...

GUH...
SCHTEM-
WÖLE—
.....

.....
...LP
US...
!?
...
RTS
...
...LP...
US...
THESE VOICES...!
THESE GIRLS...
THEY'RE STILL AWARE .....!!
...
HELP US ...!!

HELP US...
.....
PAIN ...
...IT HURTS ...
IT HURTS ...!!
HELP ...
IT HURTS ...
AH...
PAIN-FUL..
.....
HELP US...
IT HURTS ...
HELP US...
.....
IT HURTS...
AH...

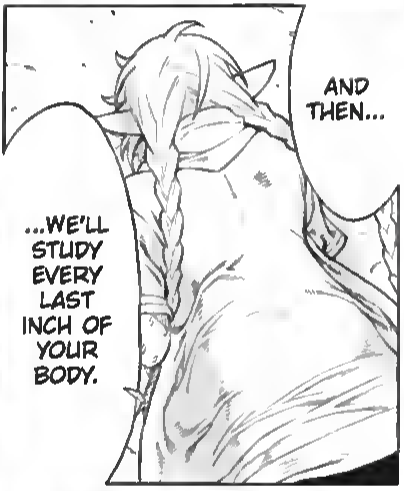
DOSA
(THUD)

... HMPH ...
HE'S SETTLED DOWN...

YES.
PREPARE A FLESH CURSE.
キチキチ
WE'VE BEEN REUNITED AFTER TWENTY YEARS...
LET'S BE FRIENDS, ASCHERIIT...

JUST LIKE FARGO...
...YOU WILL BECOME UNABLE TO KILL ME.
WITH THIS FLESH CURSE...

...IT'S ALL POINTLESS IF I STILL HAVE TO GROW OLD AND DIE.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH GLORY AND HONOR I ATTAIN AS A HERO OR A LAND-GRAVE...
UNDER-STAND?


...WE'LL STUDY EVERY LAST INCH OF YOUR BODY.
AND THEN...

YES.
DO IT.

...ASCHER-RIIT.
YOU'VE BEEN SO VERY USEFUL TO ME...

!
...
HEH
...
HA
HA...

!?
HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH...
WH...
...WHAT IS THIS ...!?
ZAKU
ZAKU
ZAKU (SWIPE)
SHUUU (FWSHH)
ZAKU
HA HA HA HA HA...

GUBA
GUBOOGHO
HUH !!?
BUCHI
BUCHI
GARNCHO
BUCHI
BUCHI
BUCHI
HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!!
!!?

AH-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA!!!
GUBWAH!?
GYAAAH!

I HEAR...
A VOICE...
WHOSE
IS
IT.....?
PIKU
!

...I'VE BEEN HEARING SO MANY VOICES...
EVER SINCE I WAS BROUGHT HERE.....
BUT SUCH A SAD VOICE...
...AND KIND...
IT'S WARM...
THIS IS DIFFER-ENT...
ヒュ
HYUU (GLEAM)
!?
WHAT ARE YOU...?
WHOSE VOICE IS IT...?

Schtemwölech
V

...WIED...
!?
SCHA-REN!?
...AHH... WIED...
YOU CAME FOR ME...

AH-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA-HA-
HA!!
EEE
!!?
ZAA
(LOOM)
ア

D-DON'T YOU WISH FOR HIM TO BE CAPTURED ALIVE!?
DON'T BE AN IDIOT!!
K-KILL HIM!
KILL HIM!!!
HURRY UP AND...
...KILL THAT DAMNED MON-STER!!

UNH...
AH...
SHIPA (THINGS)
GUH!
UNH...
KILL HIM!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!?
DA
DA (CRASH)
CHA (CHAK)

ZAN
CZŁOWIEK

K...
K...
KILL HIM!!
KILL HIIIM!!!
9!!
DA CLUNGE!
!!

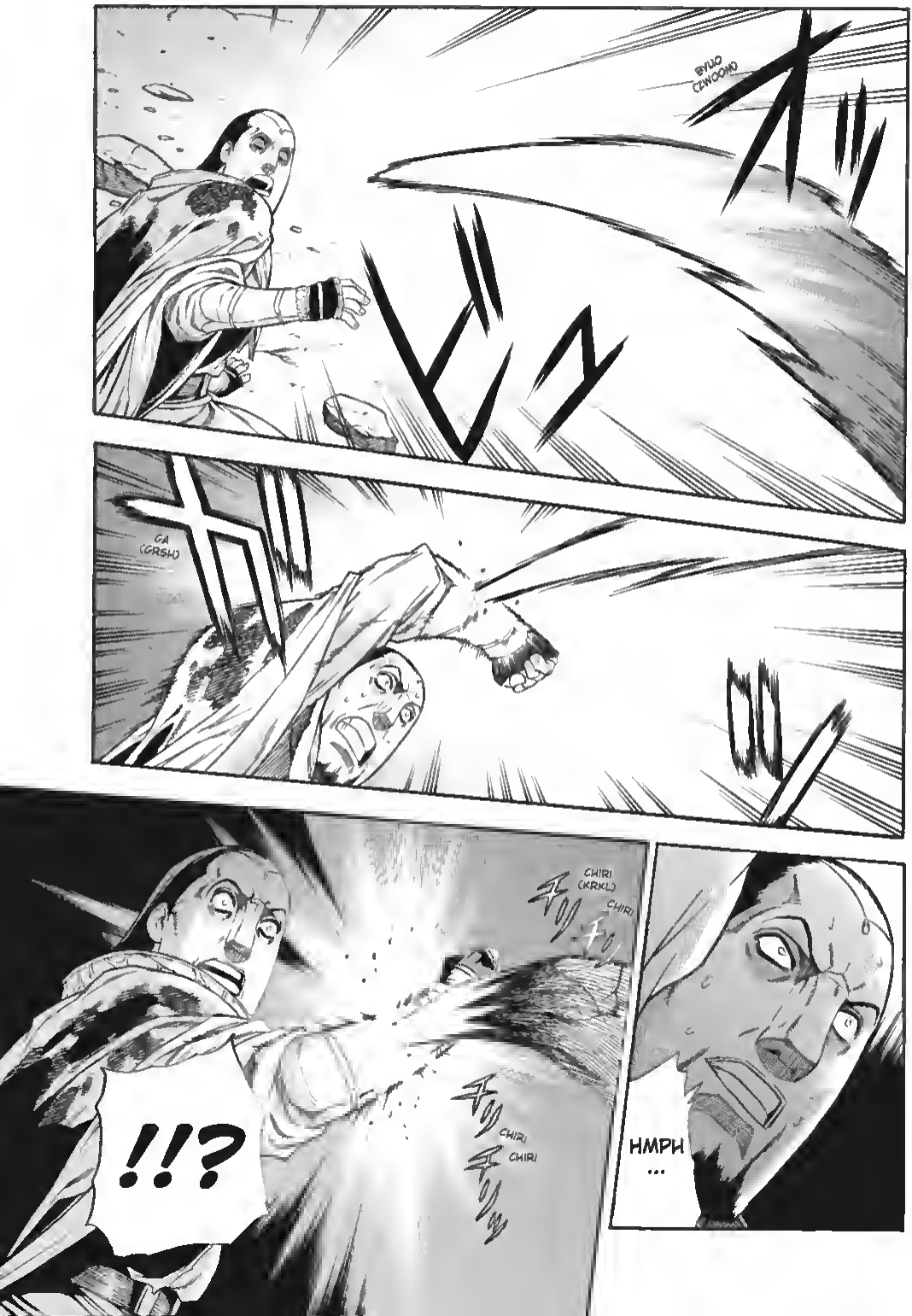
GWAA-AAAH !!?
DOGA GWAAN
!?
EE...
EEE!!
DA GDASHO
UWAH!!
DOGAGAGA GKRASHHHO
DOGA GGRUNCHO

GARA
GARA
GARA (CRUMBL)
WHOA!
WHAT THE ...!?
.....
AHH...
EVERY-ONE...
YOUR PAIN IS NO MORE.
REST NOW...
DO NOT BLAME YOUR-SELF...
...KIND ONE...

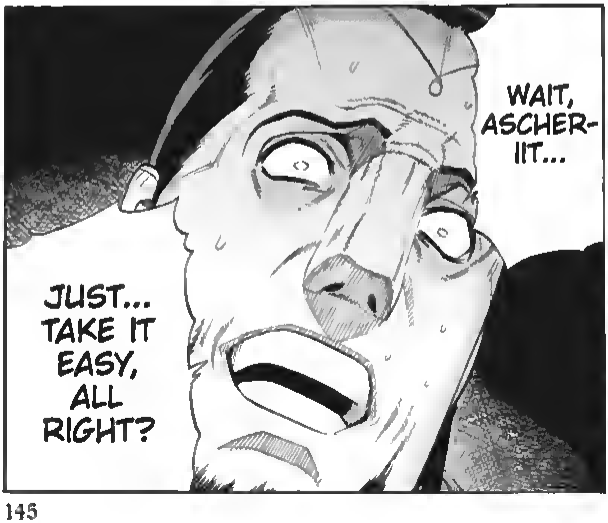
.....
KÖIN-ZELL...
EVERY-ONE...
...THEY'RE ALL SAYING, "THANK YOU"...
SUU (TEARY)

IT'S MAG-NIFI—
WHAT POWER .....!
WHAT A FORM ...!
OHH...
OH...
PAKYA (KRUNCH)
GYAA-AAAA-AAH!!!
EEE !!?
BECHA (SPLATCH)

SO...
...I CAN KILL YOU WITHOUT REGRETS !!!
...I'M SO GLAD, SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
YOU...
...ARE THE SAME ROTTEN BASTARD YOU WERE BACK ON THAT DAY.....
ASCH-ER—


BYULO CHOOHO
GA (GRSH)
CHIRI (KRKL)
CHIRI
CHIRI
CHIRI
!!?
HMPH ...

GUBA GGLRCHO
M...
MY...
MY ARM !!?
GWAA-AAAA-AAH!!!


WAIT, ASCHER-IIT...
JUST... TAKE IT EASY, ALL RIGHT?

W...
... WAIT ...

THINK BACK, ASCHERIIT!
WE... WE WERE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, WEREN'T WE?

... BUT ...

.....
YEAH ...

PLEASE WAIT .....!
ST... ... STOP ...
I...
...I BEG YOU, ASCHER-IIT!!!

GUGYAAAAH!!!

THAT'S ...
...ONE DOWN...

LADY AHT!
KÖIN-ZELL!!
ズズズズズ
!!?

In Dunkelheit
(Into Darkness)

... JUST ...
... SIX... TO GO...
GUNH ...!!
!?
ビキビキ
BIKI
BIKI (KRIK)
BIKI
BIKI
PISHI (KRAK)

ヒュ
WYLIBA CZWOOSHO
KÖIN-
ZELL
!!!

TA
(LEAP)
!!
GASHI
(GRAB)

IT'S SO THIN ...!!?
KÖINZELL'S BODY.....
WHAT ...?
CALM... DOWN... AHT...
!
KÖIN-ZELL...
KÖIN-ZELL !!?
AH ...!
NO...
YOU CAN'T ...
SISTER ... YOU'RE AWAKE ...!?
... YES ...
DON'T WORRY... HE'S FINE... AHT...

BUT ...
...IT'S NOT RIGHT ...
KÖIN-ZELL...
...KÖIN-ZELL'S BODY GOT SO THIN ALL OF A SUDDEN...
HIS POWER... WENT WILD... HE RELEASED A LOT OF ENERGY...JUST NOW...
BUT... HIS WILL IS STILL STRONG...
IT'S BINDING HIS BODY TO THAT FORM...
THAT'S WHY...

GO GO GO GO
BISHI (CRMBL)
PAKI (CCRAK)
GO GO GO GO GO GO GO GO
GO (RMB)
!?
DO DO DO DO DO (DMM)
DO DO (CRASH)
!!?
GO GO (CRASH)
LET'S MOVE!
THE LAKE WATER IS...!!
DAM-MIT.

DO
DO
DO

THOSE KNIGHTS WERE AT FAULT.....
WAIT, PLEASE!
HAVE MERCY ...!!
...ARE THE ONES WHO SAVED US!!
GERANPEN AND HIS MEN...
PLEASE, SIR FARGO!!

!!
THOSE WHO BETRAY THE HEAVENS ONCE...
...MUST NOT BE PERMITTED TO ERR AGAIN.....
...THE LANDGRAVE ARMY WILL HAVE YOU.
IF YOU ARE A PURE-HEARTED MAN WHO FIGHTS FOR THE EMPEROR AND FOR THE PEOPLE...
...ONE OF THE SEVEN HEROES... AND OUR LEADER... HE'S FOUGHT AGAINST THAT OLD MODE OF THINKING.
...LANDGRAVE [illegible]-WÖLECH GRANTED A HOLY LANCE FROM THE EMPEROR...
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
A...
...A ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE GUY LIKE ME? IN THE LANDGRAVE ARMY!?
I'D LIKE TO INVITE YOUR GROUP OF TEN TO JOIN OUR FORCES.
YOU WILL BE THEIR DECURI-ON.

I'M ON A SPECIAL MISSION, DIRECTLY FROM THE LANDGRAVE HIMSELF
I'M WORKING TO MAKE MOLLAN A GOOD AND PEACEFUL LAND ONE THAT BEFITS OUR HEROIC LANDGRAVE
SO PLEASE...
...LEND US YOUR STRENGTH...
.....!
DO YOU DECLINE?
OF...
...OF COURSE NOT!

WOULD YOU LET ME... CALL YOU "BIG BRO"...?
...I'VE GOT JUST ONE REQUEST...
...?
TELL ME.
...I KNOW I CAN DO ANYTHING IF IT'S FOR A FELLOW BROTHER IN ARMS...
I REALIZE IT'S A BOLD REQUEST, BUT...
CALL ME WHATEVER YOU WISH.

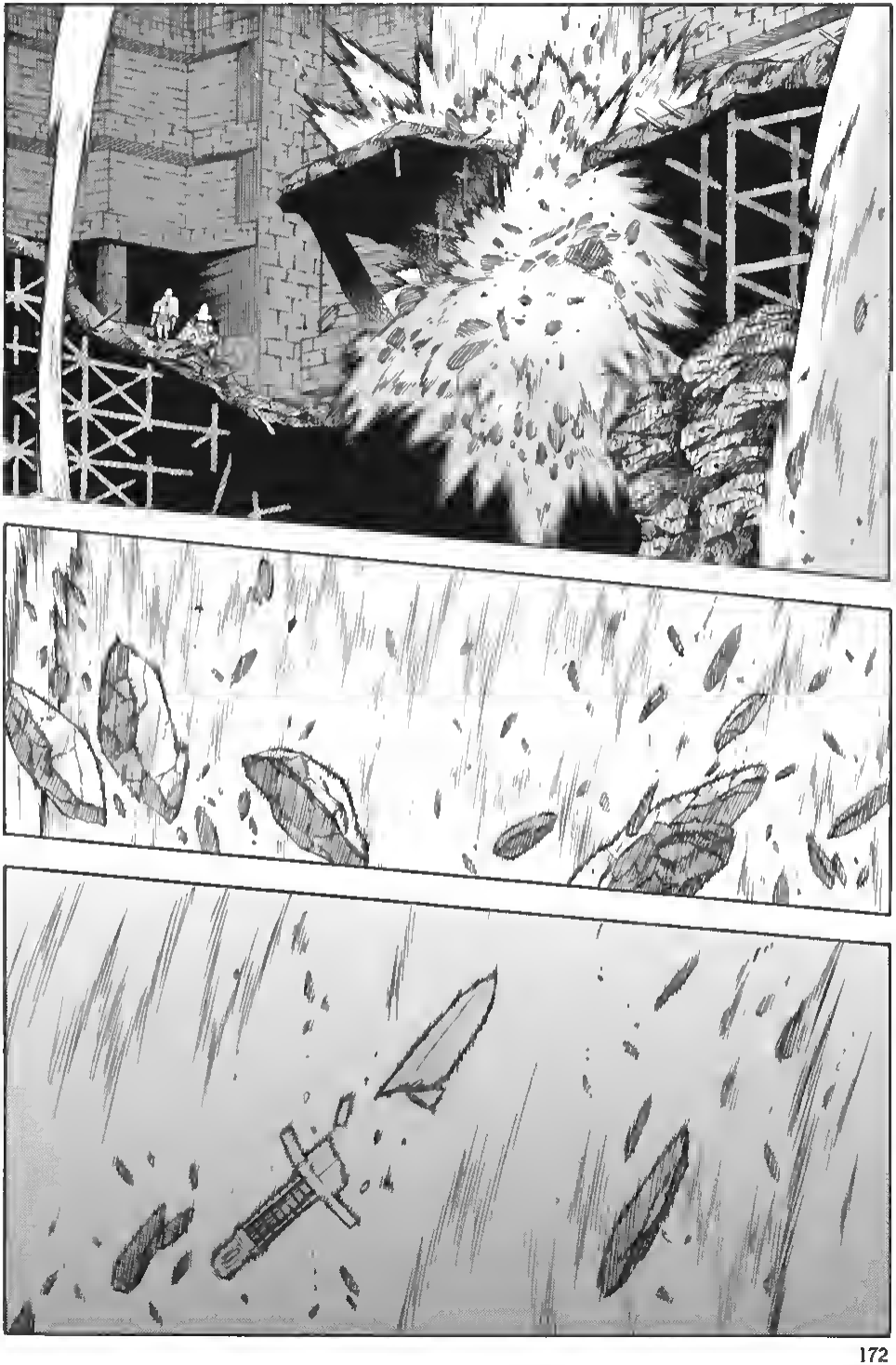
SINCE THAT DAY...
...EVERY-THING I'VE DONE HAS BEEN FOR YOU, BIG BRO..... AND EVEN THOUGH I WAS ALWAYS CLOSEST TO YOU...
...I NEVER SAW YOUR TRUE FACE...
...AND THE THINGS YOU HAD TO DO FOR EVERYONE'S SAKE...

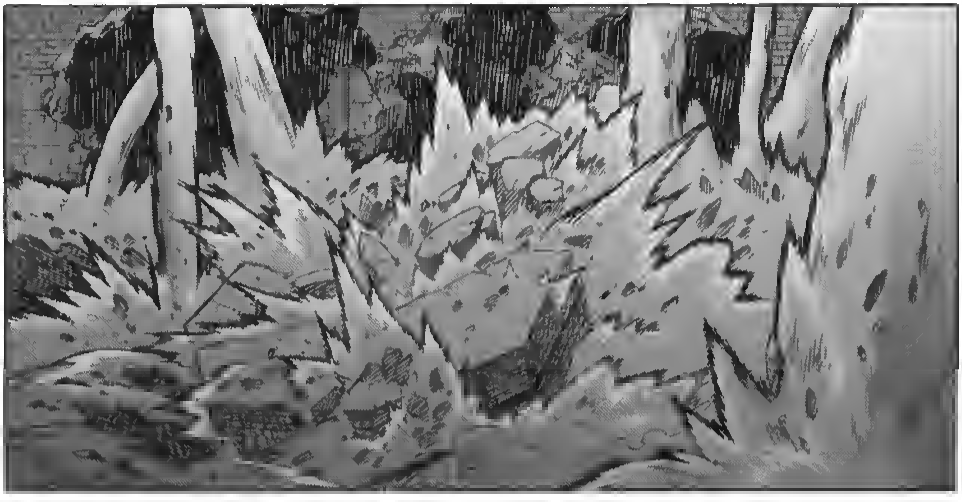
I NEVER ...
I COULDN'T ...!!
IN THE END, I.....

!!?

GE-
RAN-
PEN!!
WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING!?
HURRY
UP
AND—
GORA
(CRUMBLE)
!!!

GERANPEN!!!





Der Leere Sarg (The Empty Coffin)

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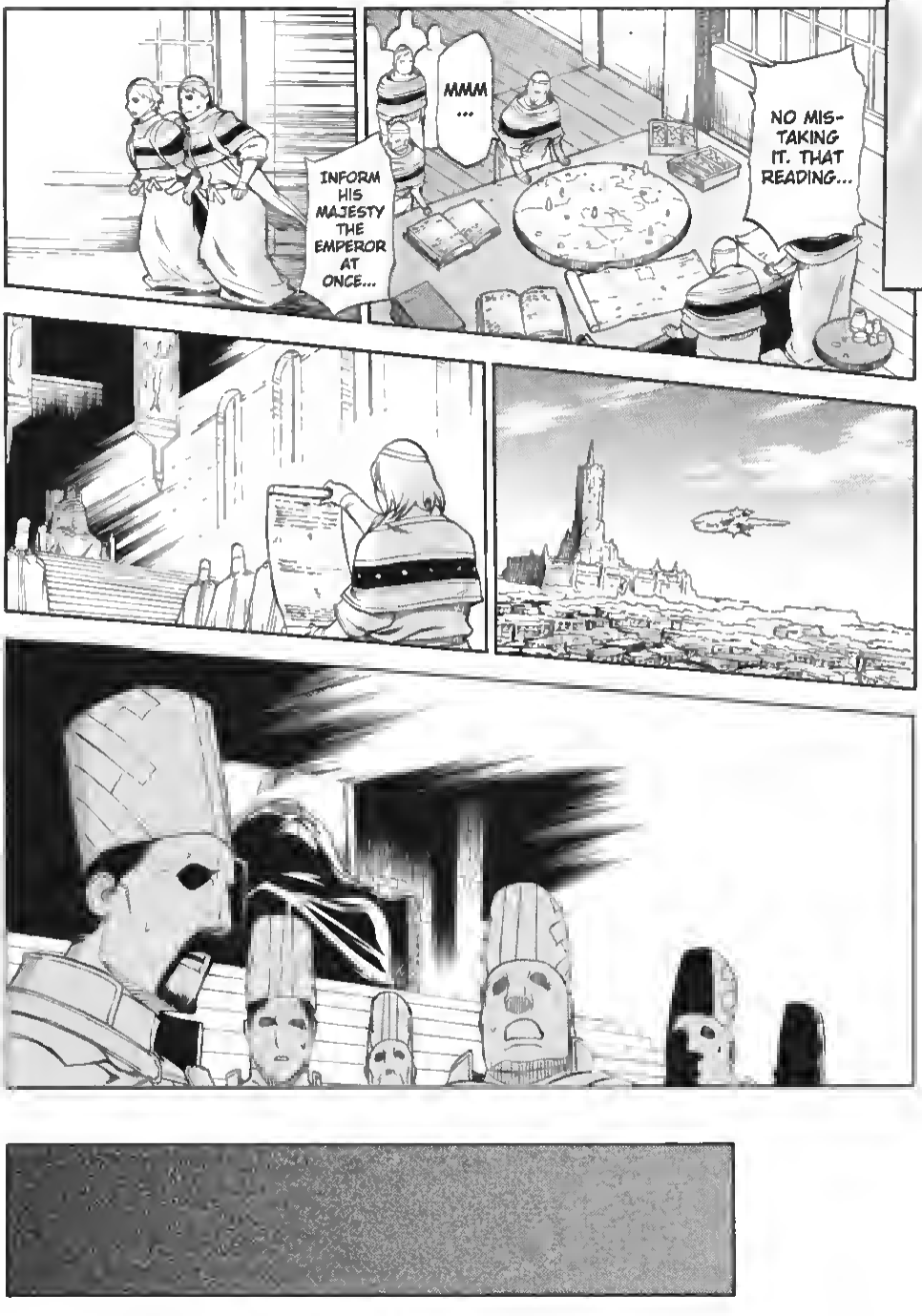
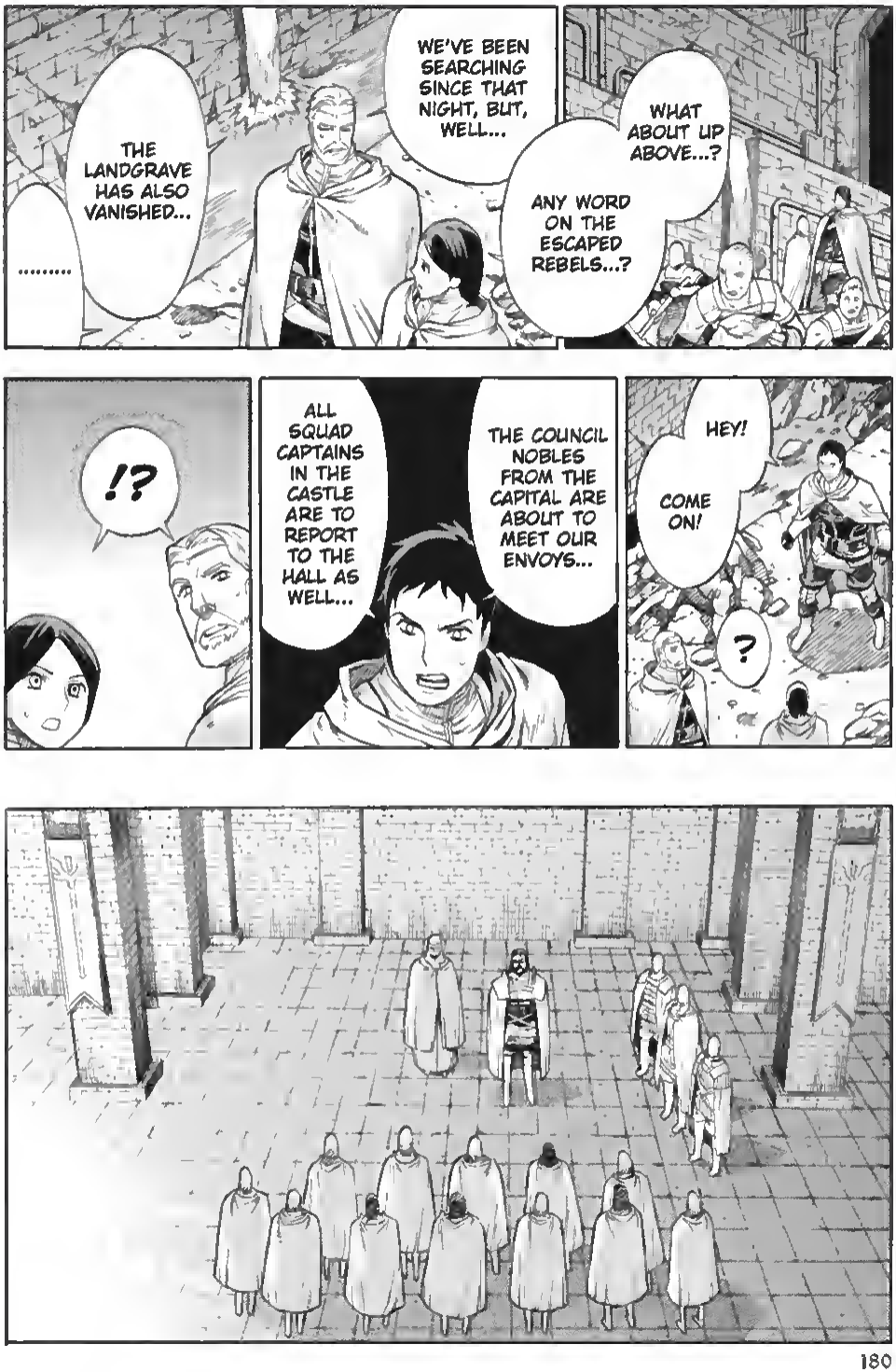
!?
...A STAR...
I SEE ONE STAR...
IT FALLS, PIERCED BY AN ARROW SHINING WITH TWO COLORS...
SWAL-LOWED BY DARK-NESS...
TH...
...THIS IS NO SMALL MATTER...
!!
THAT MUST BE...
ONE OF SEVEN GREAT STARS...
ONE IN THE FAR EASTERN SKY...

DAMN! WHEN DID THEY...!?
LOOK! THE WINGED WOLF...


INFORM HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR AT ONCE...
MMM ...
NO MIS-TAKING IT. THAT READING...

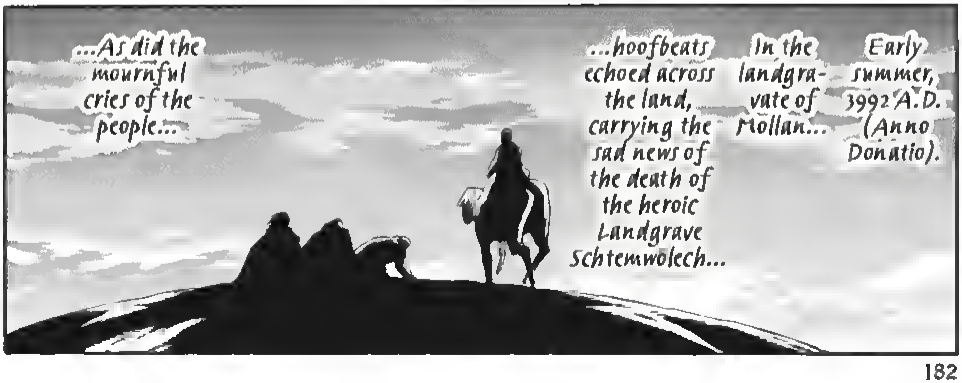
A FEW DAYS LATER

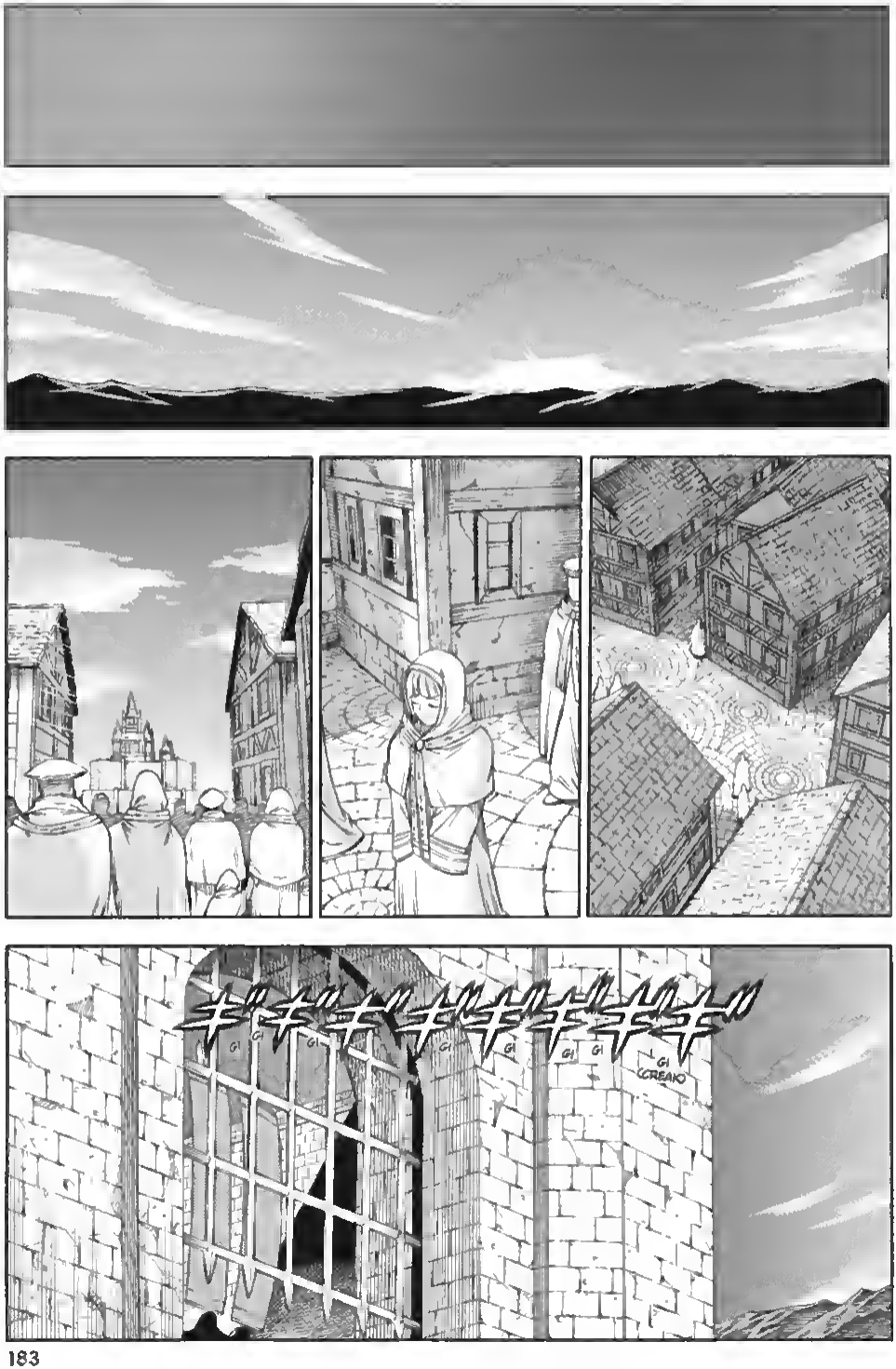

.....
THE LANDGRAVE HAS ALSO VANISHED...
WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING SINCE THAT NIGHT, BUT, WELL...
ANY WORD ON THE ESCAPED REBELS...?
WHAT ABOUT UP ABOVE...?
!?
ALL SQUAD CAPTAINS IN THE CASTLE ARE TO REPORT TO THE HALL AS WELL...
THE COUNCIL NOBLES FROM THE CAPITAL ARE ABOUT TO MEET OUR ENVOYS...
HEY!
COME ON!
?

I REALIZE IT MUST BE HARD FOR YOU CAPTAINS TO ACCEPT THAT THE LANDGRAVE HAS PASSED...
...GIVEN THAT HIS BODY HAS NOT BEEN FOUND.
WHAT NON-SENSE!
THE LAND-GRAVE... WE HAVEN'T EVEN...!
HOLD A FUNERAL, YOU SAY!?
BUT... NO...
"ONE OF THE SEVEN STARS HAS FALLEN"...
...THE SHRINE PRINCESS OF MONDEN-BÜRGEN HAS PER-CEIVED HIS PASSING.
HOW-EVER ...
...AND POWERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION WITH ILL INTENTIONS WILL BEGIN THEIR PLOTTING...
THE PEOPLE WILL GRIEVE THE LOSS OF THE LAND-GRAVE...

FOR A LANDGRAVE WHO GAVE HIS ALL FOR THIS LAND-GRAVATE...
FOR A HERO WHO FOUGHT FOR THE EMPIRE...
WE WILL HOLD A FUNERAL BEFITTING ONE OF THE SEVEN HEROES.
WE MUST KEEP THE CHAOS HERE TO A MINIMUM.

UNH ...
.....


...As did the mournful cries of the people...
...hoofbeats echoed across the land, carrying the sad news of the death of the heroic Landgrave Schtemwolech...
In the landgra-vate of Mollan...
Early summer, 3992 A.D. (Anno Donatio).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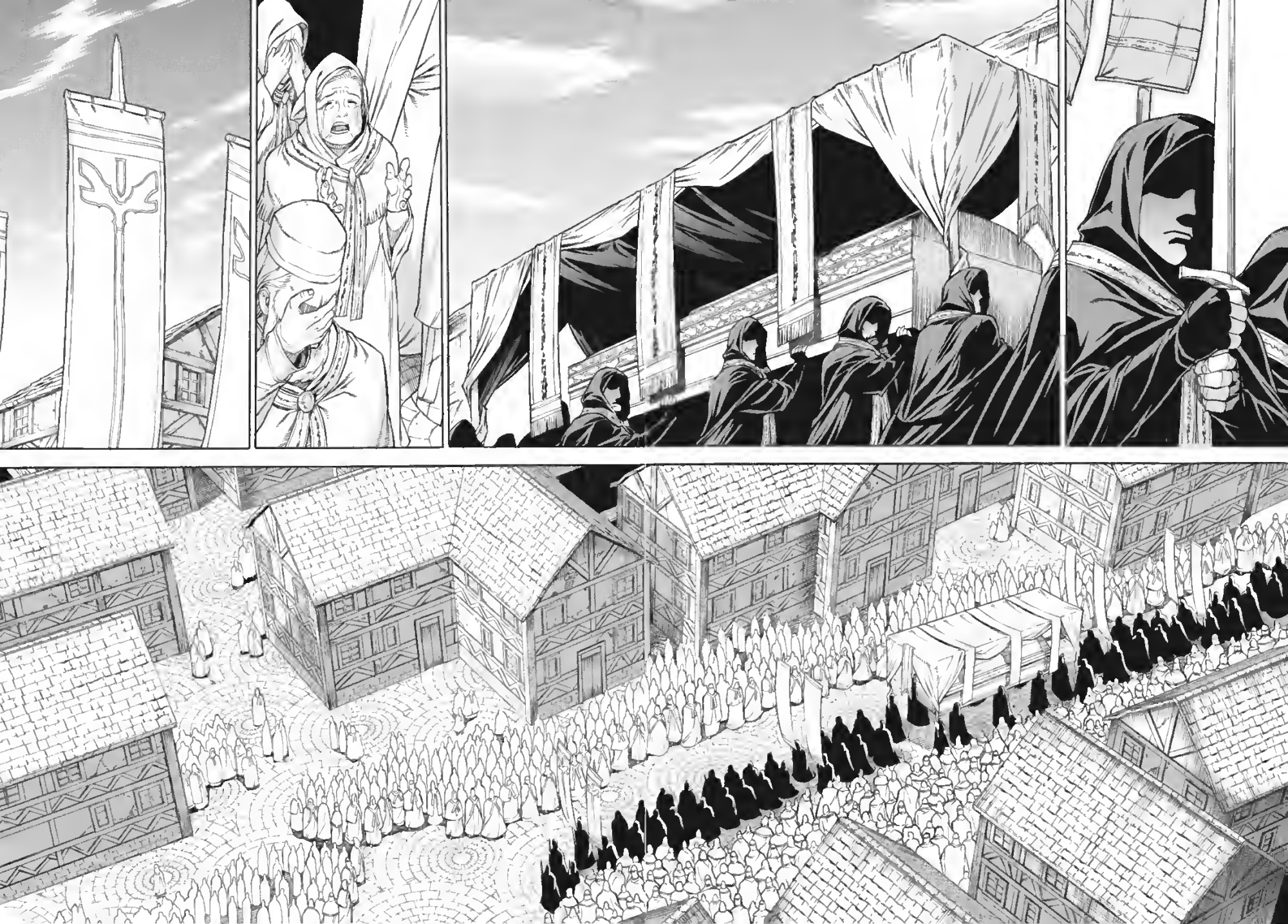
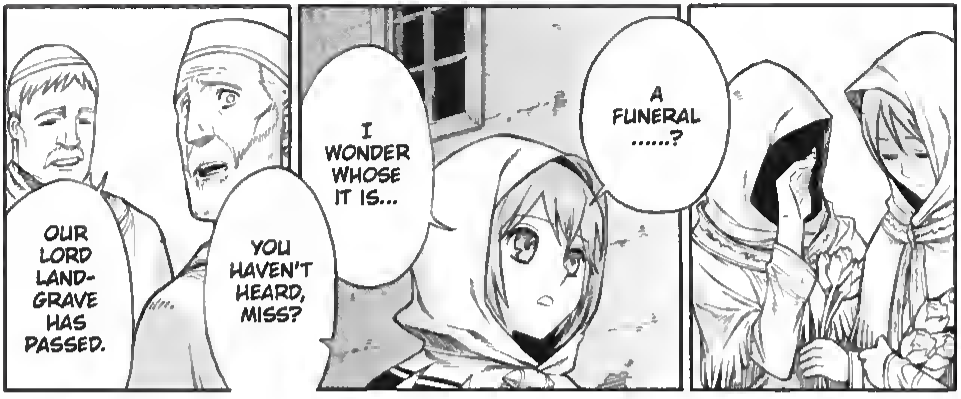
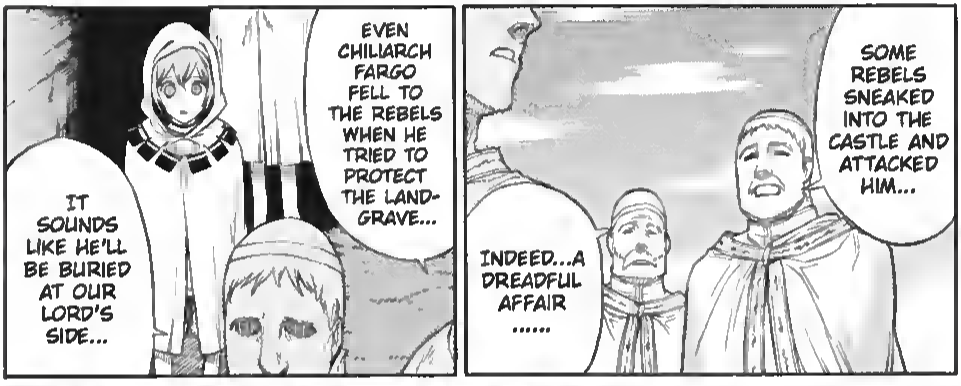


?
ALL THESE PEOPLE... WHAT'S GOING ON...?
WE'RE IN LUCK.
I DON'T SEE ANY SIGN OF THE LANDGRAVE ARMY.
WE CAN SLIP THROUGH THE CROWD.


OUR LORD LAND-GRAVE HAS PASSED.
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD, MISS?
I WONDER WHOSE IT IS...
A FUNERAL .....?


IT SOUNDS LIKE HE'LL BE BURIED AT OUR LORD'S SIDE...
EVEN CHILIARCH FARGO FELL TO THE REBELS WHEN HE TRIED TO PROTECT THE LAND-GRAVE...
INDEED...A DREADFUL AFFAIR .....
SOME REBELS SNEAKED INTO THE CASTLE AND ATTACKED HIM...

.....
SO FARGO ...
...WAS KILLED ...?

KÖIN-ZELL.....
KÖINZELL MUST HAVE GOTTEN THAT GUY!
IT WAS KÖIN-ZELL ...!
.....
!
HERE THEY COME...
LORD SCHTEM-WÖLECH .....!
AHH ... OUR LORD LAND-GRAVE ...

SIR FARGO'S COFFIN...
OHH ...
LOOK ...
!!
SIR FARGO !!

ZEFFI
.....
HEY!
KEEP BACK, NOW.
NO, PEEPI.
IT'S THANKS TO SIR FARGO THAT HE WAS ABLE TO MOVE HERE...
SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL...
WHO IS THAT CHILD...?
AH, ISN'T HE A MIRUEL-MIRAEL? THAT TRIBE NEAR THE BORDER?

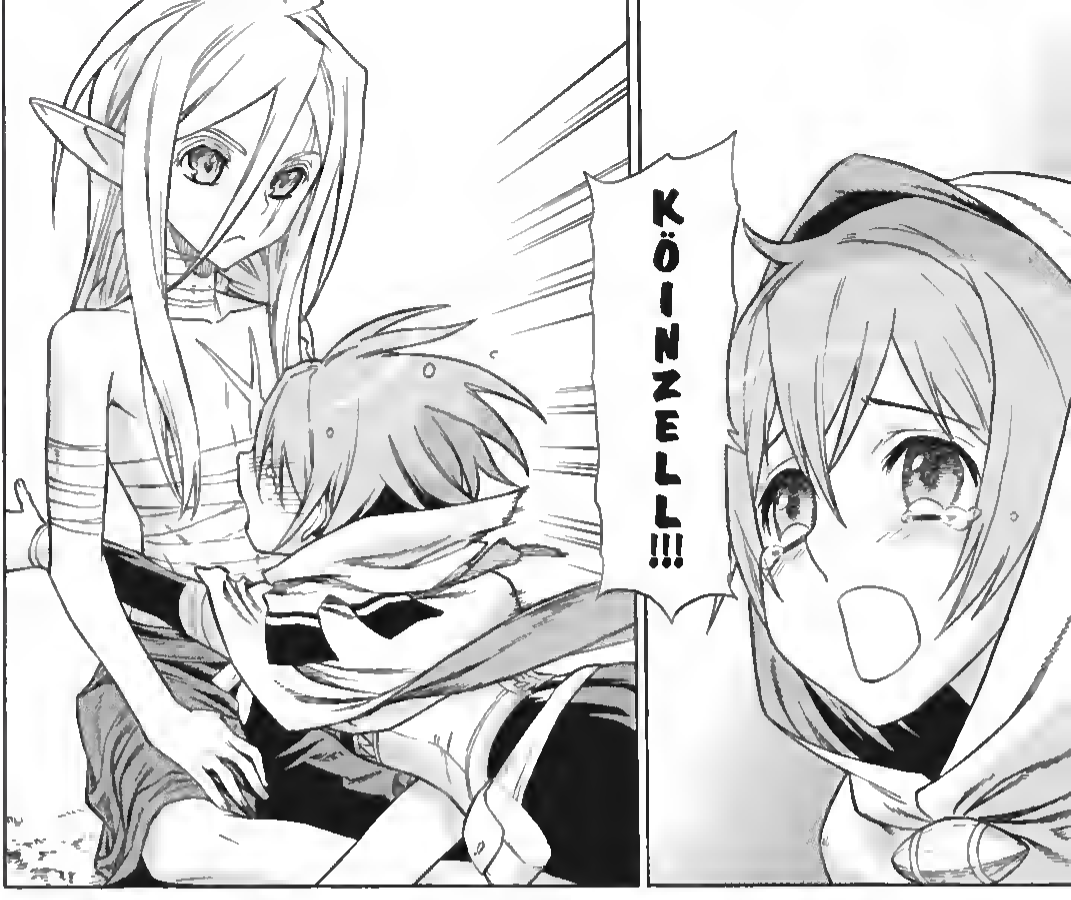
NO, NO, NO... ZEFFI...!
DON'T CRY OVER THAT GUY...
HE'S THE ONE WHO KILLED YOUR MOM AND DAD!!

!?
HEY.
HERE YOU GUYS ARE.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERY-WHERE.
WIED !!?

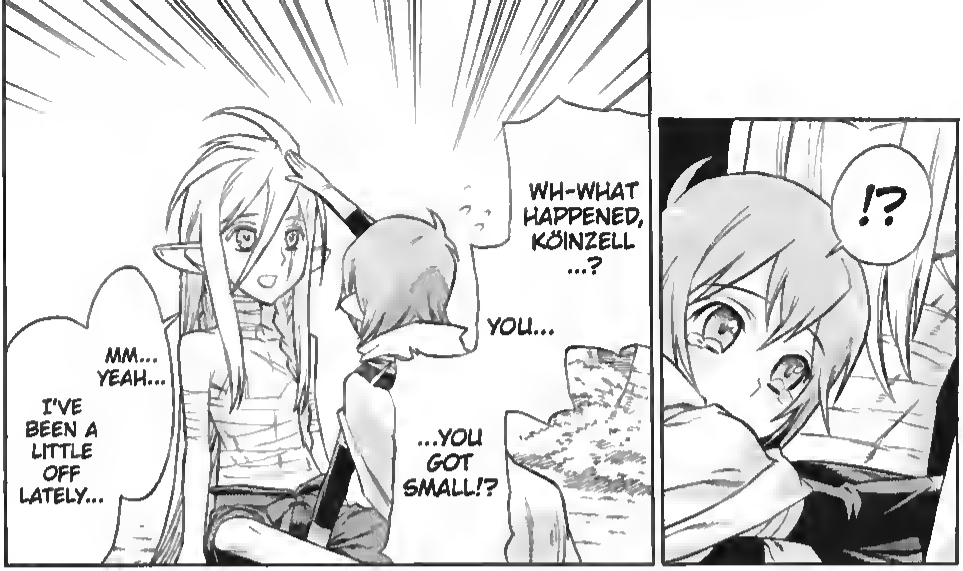
COME WITH ME.
ARE KÖINZELL AND MISS AHT...?
WHERE'S KÖIN-ZELL!?
SO YOU'RE SAFE...
LITTLE MORE. HANG IN THERE.
ARE WE THERE YET?
YOU OKAY, PEEPI?
I'M... OKAY...
HAFF!
HAFF!

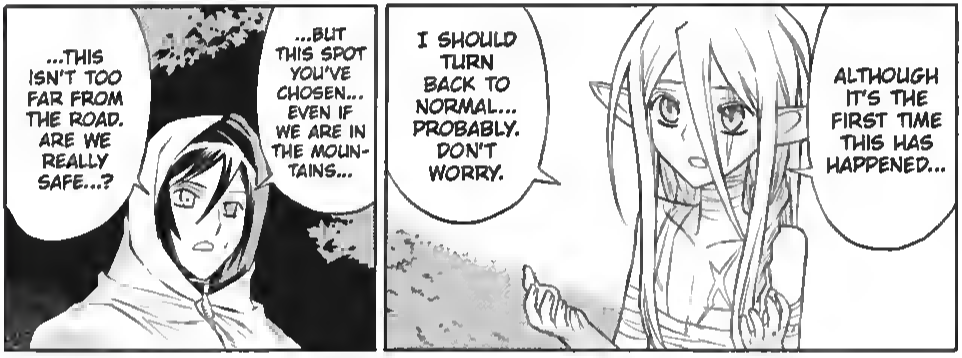
IT WAS ROUGH, 'COS I KNEW YOU'D BE HIDING TOO...
...BUT IT DIDN'T END UP TAKING TOO LONG TO FIND YOU.
...WE PICKED A HIDING SPOT THAT WAS SOMEWHAT CLOSE TO THE MAIN ROAD BUT FAR ENOUGH AWAY THAT PEOPLE WOULDN'T STUMBLE INTO OUR CAMP.
WE KNEW WE NEEDED TO FIND YOU TWO, SO...
...SO WE'VE BEEN CAMPING OUT IN THE MOUN-TAINS...
TRUE ...
THE LAND-GRAVE ARMY IS SEARCH-ING FOR US...
THAT'S IT.
THERE.

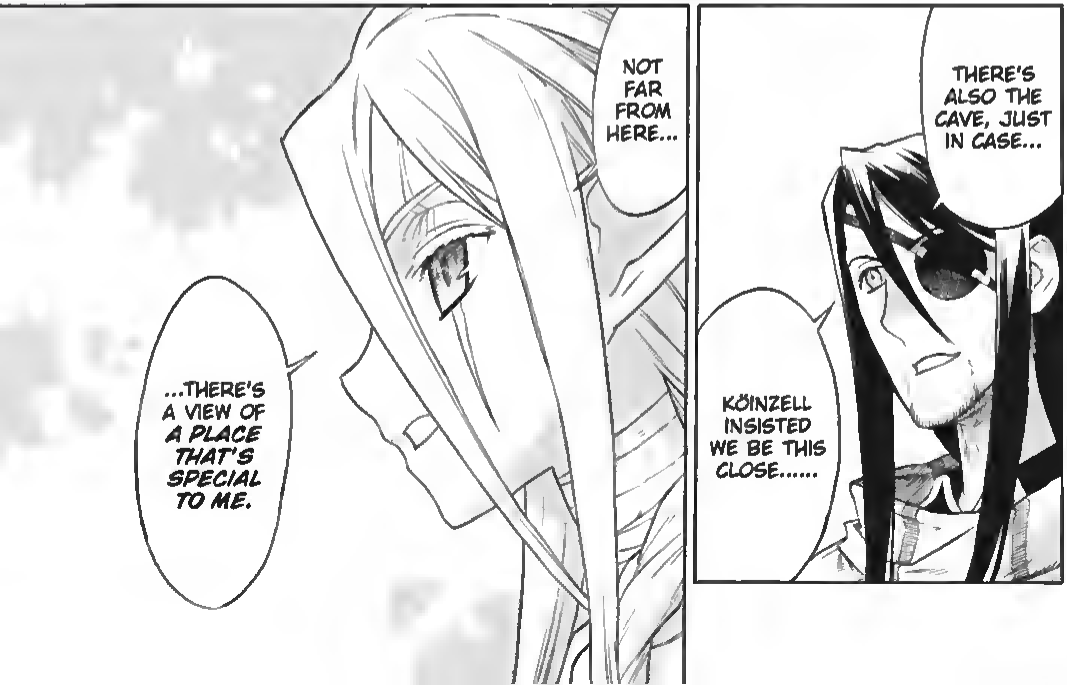
!!
!
PEEPI
...
...AND ALTEA ?

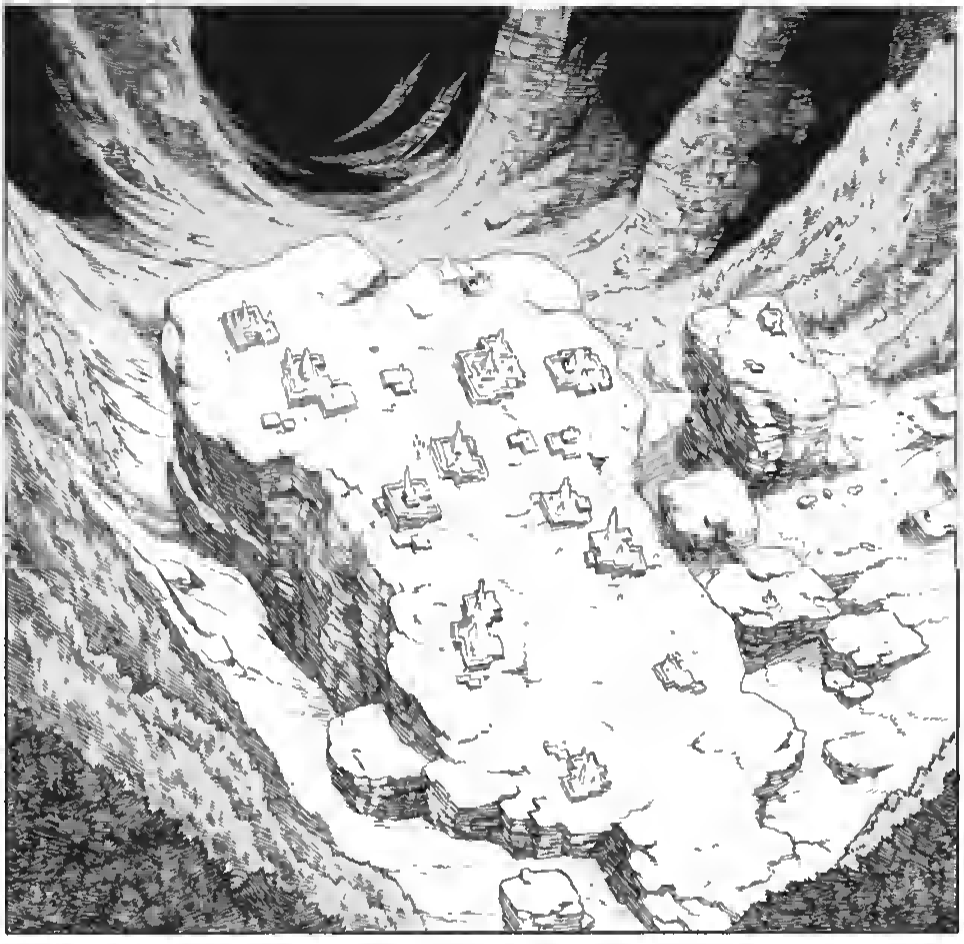

KÖINZELL!!!

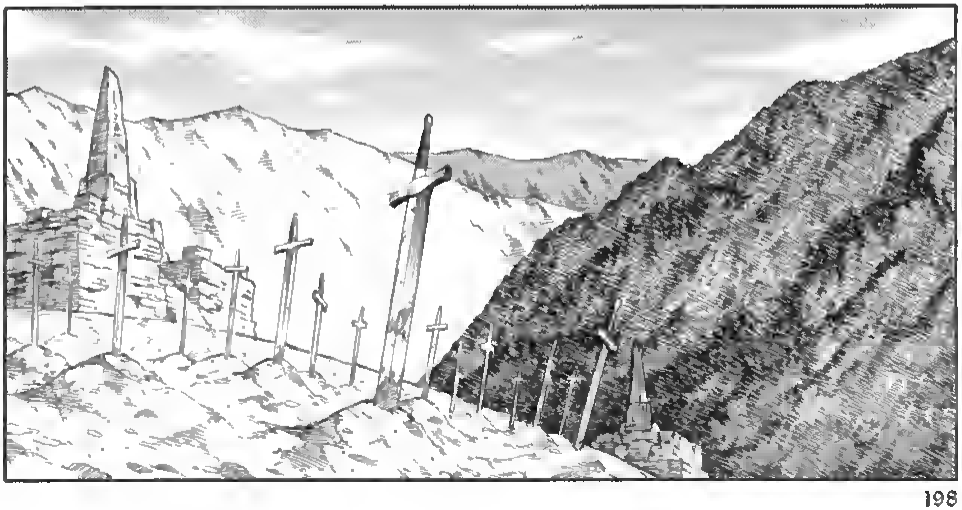
KÖINZELL!
KÖINZELL!
I WAS SO WORRIED ...!


WH-WHAT HAPPENED, KÖINZELL ...?
YOU...
...YOU GOT SMALL!?
MM... YEAH... I'VE BEEN A LITTLE OFF LATELY...
!?


...THIS ISN'T TOO FAR FROM THE ROAD. ARE WE REALLY SAFE...?
...BUT THIS SPOT YOU'VE CHOSEN... EVEN IF WE ARE IN THE MOUNTAINS...
I SHOULD TURN BACK TO NORMAL... PROBABLY. DON'T WORRY.
ALTHOUGH IT'S THE FIRST TIME THIS HAS HAPPENED...


NOT FAR FROM HERE...
...THERE'S A VIEW OF *A PLACE THAT'S SPECIAL TO ME.*
THERE'S ALSO THE CAVE, JUST IN CASE...
KÖINZELL INSISTED WE BE THIS CLOSE.....





SO SHE'S ...
...THE ONE WIED WAS SEARCHING FOR...?
YEAH ...
KÖIN-ZELL...
...AND THAT GERANPEN GUY ARE THE ONES WE HAVE TO THANK FOR GET-TING HER BACK.
.....
MR. GERAN-PEN...
.....

Der Leere Sarg (The Empty Coffin)

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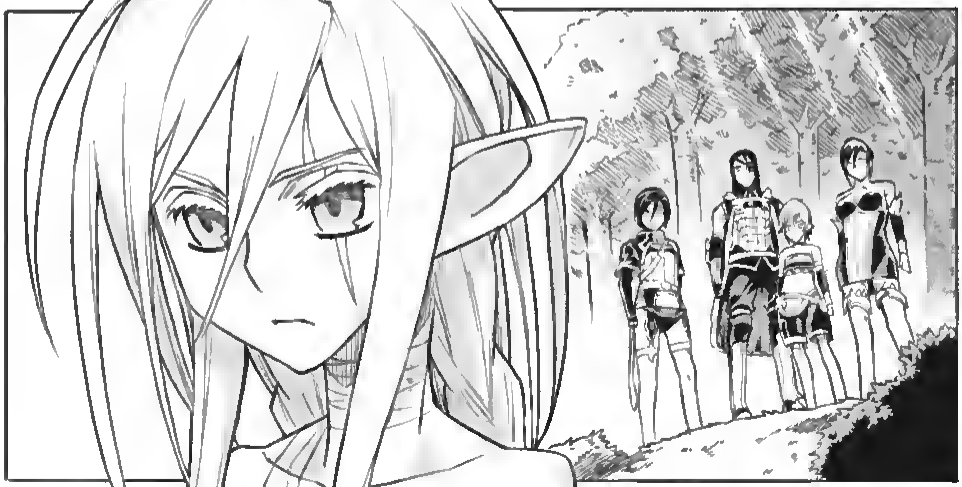
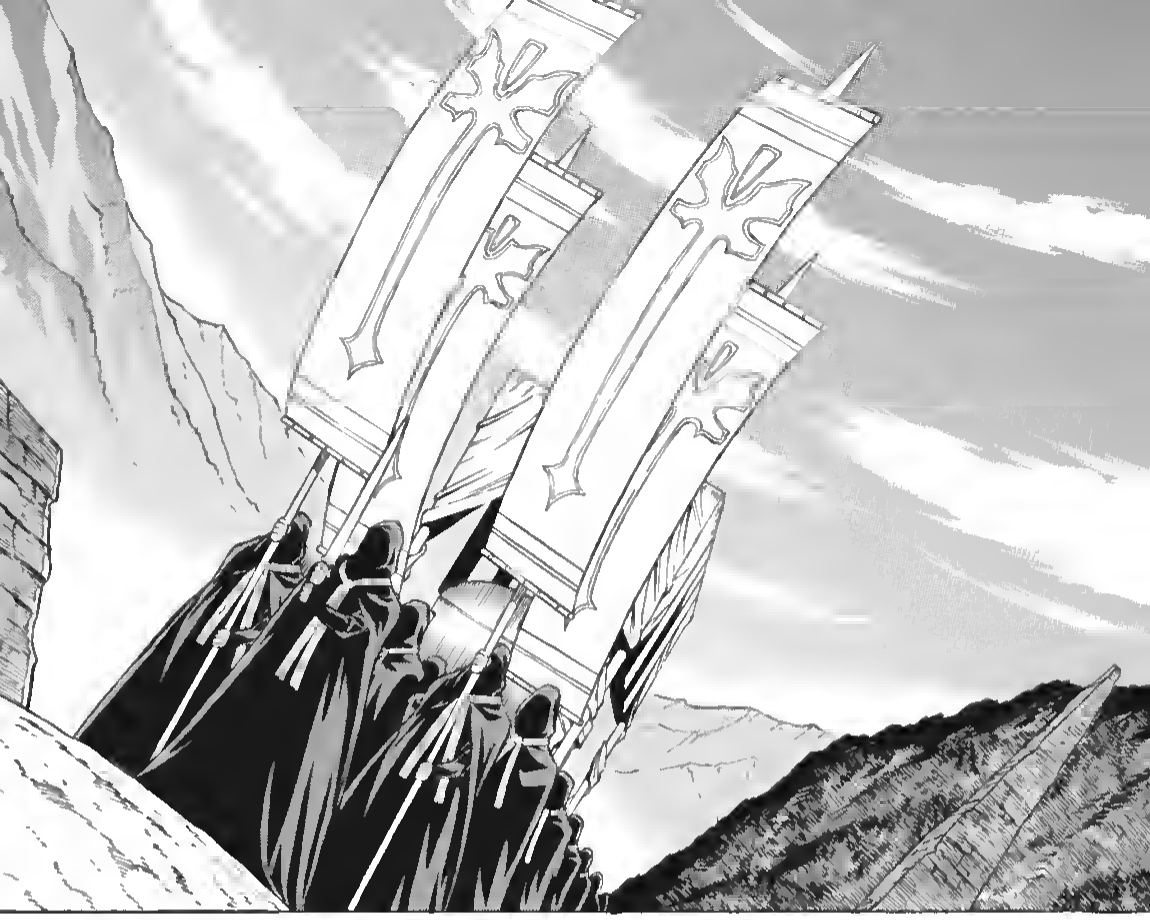


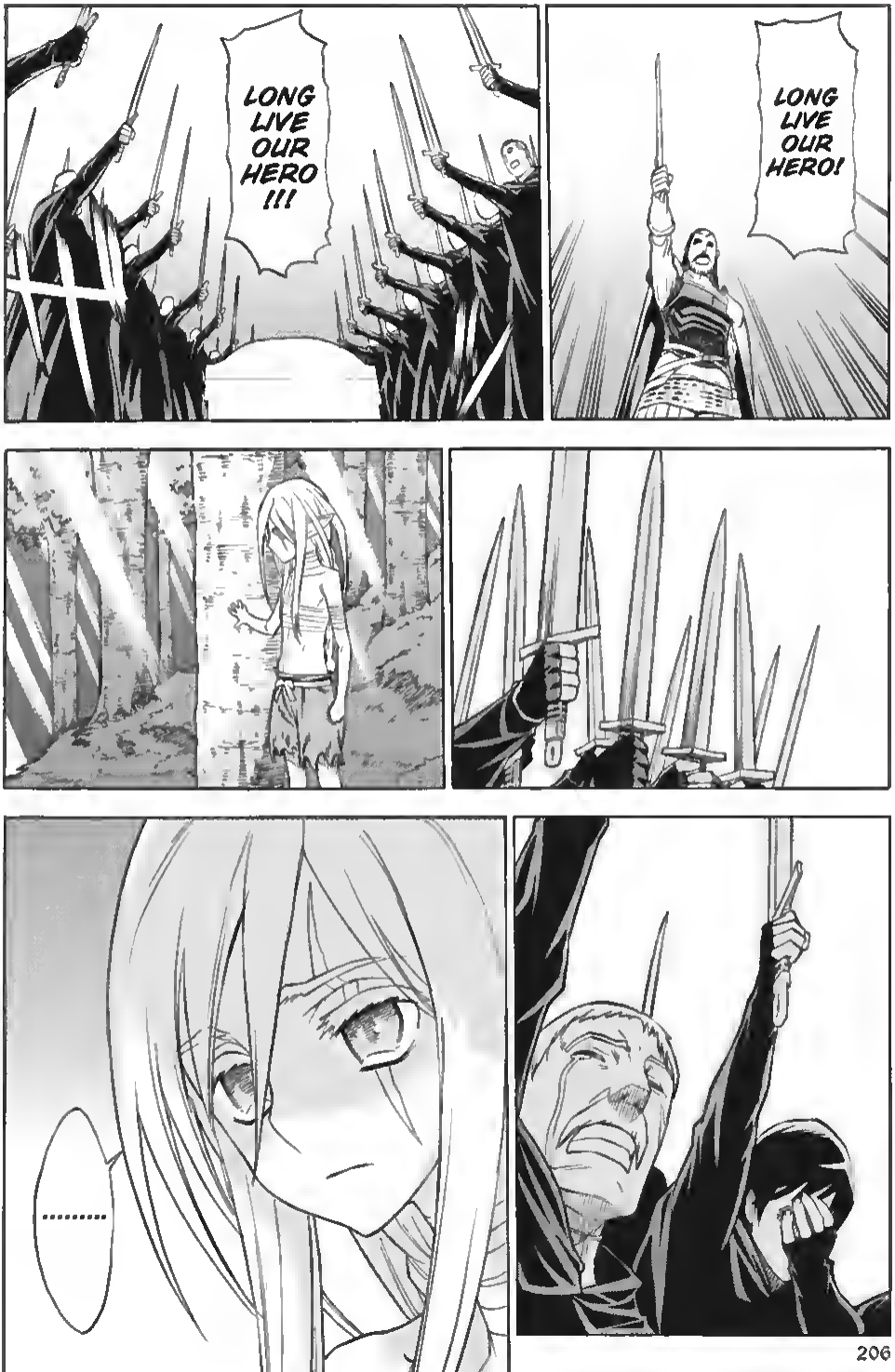
DOWN IN THAT VALLEY...LOOKS LIKE A BUNCH OF THE GRAVES OF BRAVE WARRIORS WHO FOUGHT AND DIED FOR THE LANDGRAVATE.
TWENTY YEARS AGO...
THAT'S ...
...KÖIN-ZELL'S SPECIAL PLACE ...?
...KÖINZELL FOUGHT ALONGSIDE SOME OF THEM IN THE GREAT WAR...
!?
H-HOLD ON...
TWENTY YEARS AGO...?
...KÖIN-ZELL'S REAL NAME IS...
... ASCHER-IIT.

THEY BRANDED HIM A TRAITOROUS LANCE...
HE'S ONE OF THE ONES BANISHED INTO DARKNESS BY THE SEVEN HEROES.
.....
TO THINK THAT MY CUSTOMERS AND I DREAMED SO LONGINGLY OF *THE LANDS RULED BY THE SEVEN*...
... HOW AW-FUL.

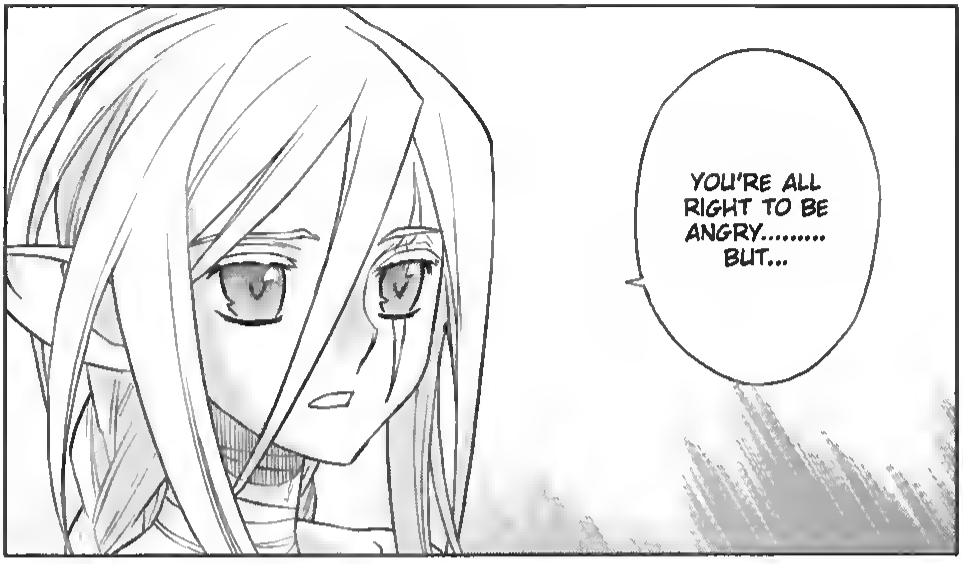
.....
!
THANK YOU... I'VE HAD ENOUGH.
LET'S GO BACK.
THERE ...!
... LOOK.
?
.....!

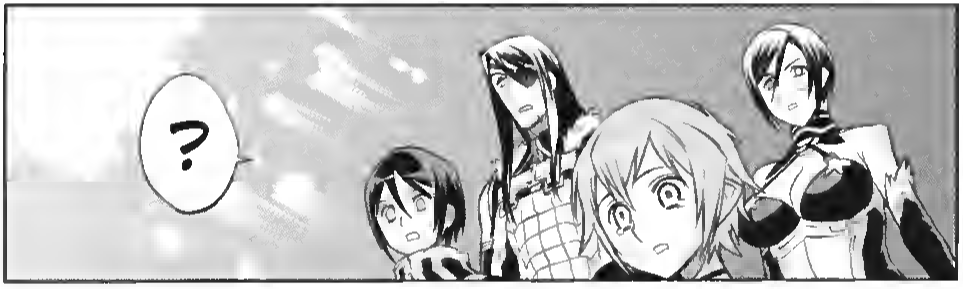


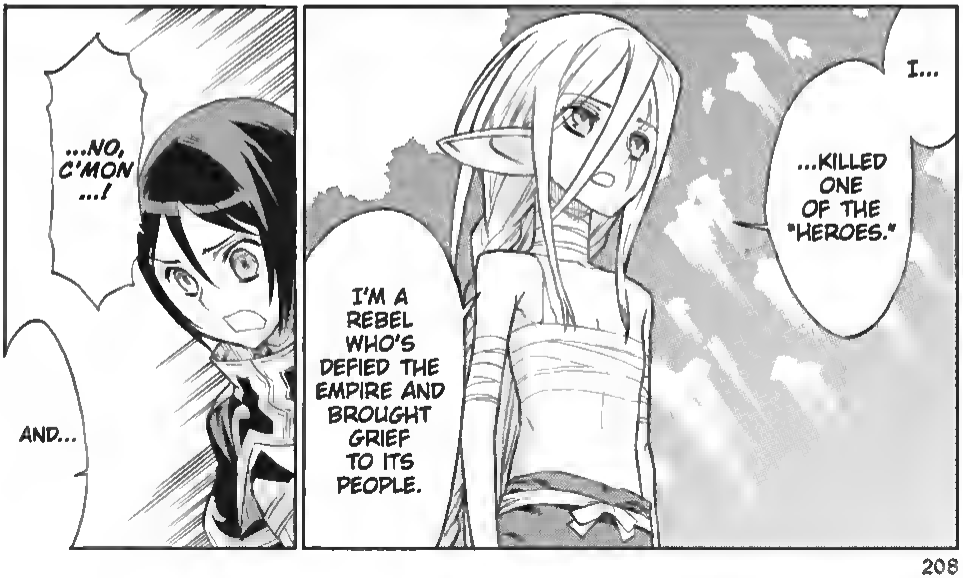
...AS YOU ALL KNOW...
...THE LANDGRAVE'S BODY IS NOT IN HIS COFFIN...
SHORTLY... WE WILL ERECT A GRAVESTONE HERE AS A TESTAMENT TO THE LANDGRAVE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS...
HOW-EVER...
BUT THE LANDGRAVE WOULD WANT IT THIS WAY.
HE WOULD WANT THE PEACE OF MOLLAN PRESERVED .....
WE LOST OUR GREAT HERO TO AN EVIL BLADE...
...AND IT IS WITH REGRET THAT WE HOLD HIS FUNERAL IN SUCH A FASHION.


LONG LIVE OUR HERO !!!
LONG LIVE OUR HERO!
.....

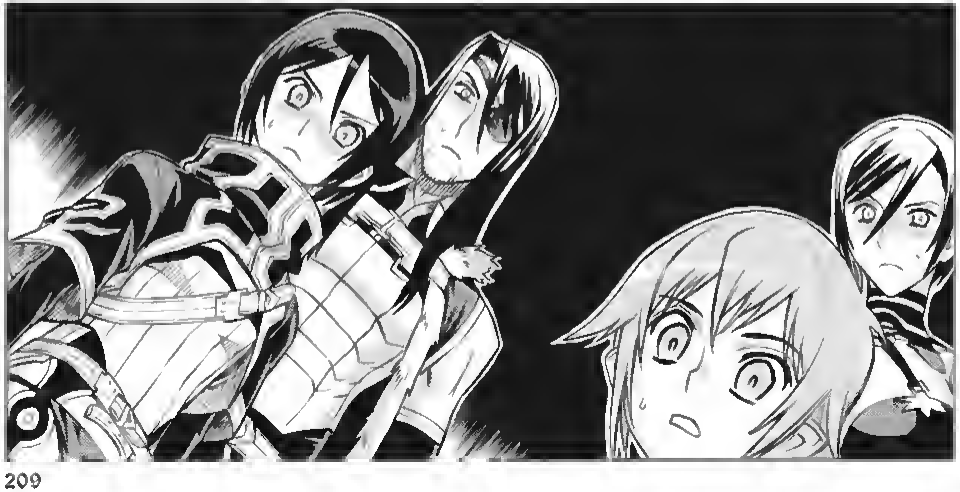
THIS ...
...THIS BIG, FANCY FUNERAL .....
...ALL FOR A GUY WHO TRICKED MR. GERANPEN AND EVERYONE ELSE...
THEY... SHOULDN'T DO THIS!!
.....
NO ONE KNOWS WHAT SCHTEM-WÖLECH WAS REALLY LIKE...
THAT'S WHY THEY CAN STAND TO CARRY HIS COFFIN, HONORING THE BASTARD LIKE THAT...
... DAMN ...!!
HE WAS THE ONE... BEHIND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TO MY SISTER...!
.....


YOU'RE ALL RIGHT TO BE ANGRY..... BUT...


?

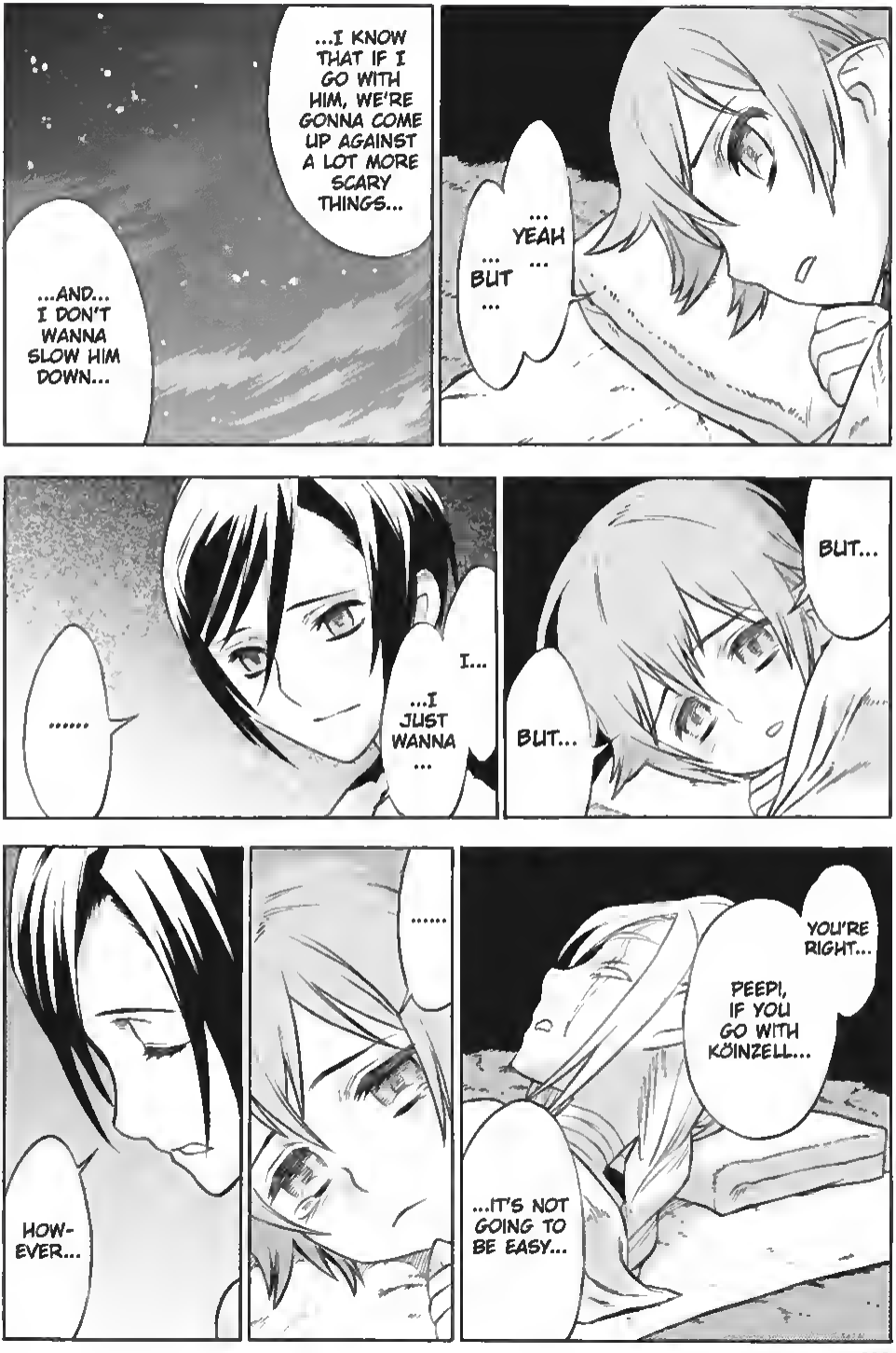

I...
...KILLED ONE OF THE "HEROES."
I'M A REBEL WHO'S DEFIED THE EMPIRE AND BROUGHT GRIEF TO ITS PEOPLE.
...NO, C'MON ...!
AND...

THOSE SIX HEROES OF THE EMPIRE, BELOVED BY THE PEOPLE AND PROTECTED BY BRAVE WARRIORS.....
...I'M SETTING OUT TO KILL THE OTHER SIX.
...FROM HERE ON...



YOU'D BE WISE...
...TO STAY AWAY FROM ME...

.....
.....I...
CAN'T SLEEP, PEEPI?
YOU WANT TO GO WITH KÖINZELL?


...I KNOW THAT IF I GO WITH HIM, WE'RE GONNA COME UP AGAINST A LOT MORE SCARY THINGS...
...AND... I DON'T WANNA SLOW HIM DOWN...
... YEAH ... BUT ...
BUT...
BUT...
I... ...I JUST WANNA ...
.....
.....
HOW-EVER...
YOU'RE RIGHT...
PEEPI, IF YOU GO WITH KÖINZELL...
...IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY...

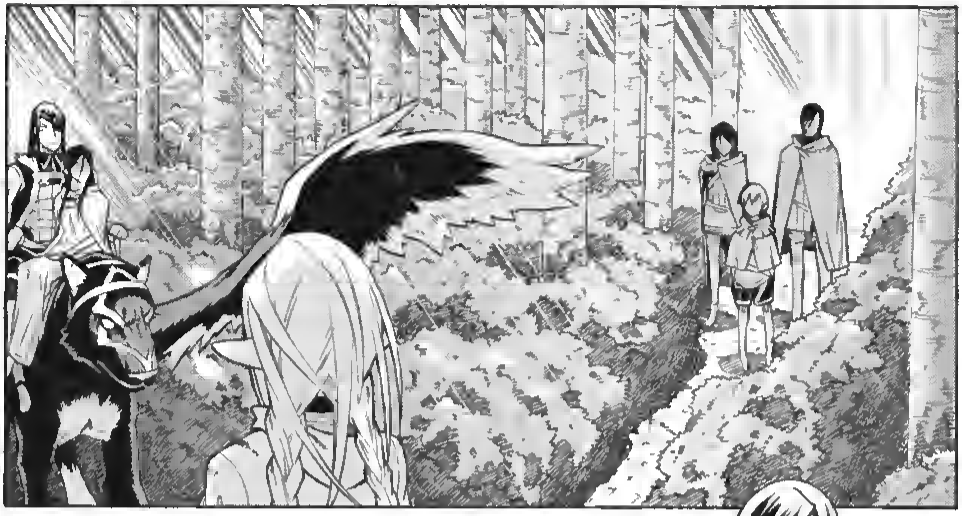
...I DON'T THINK ...
...YOU'D BE THE ONLY ONE GOING.

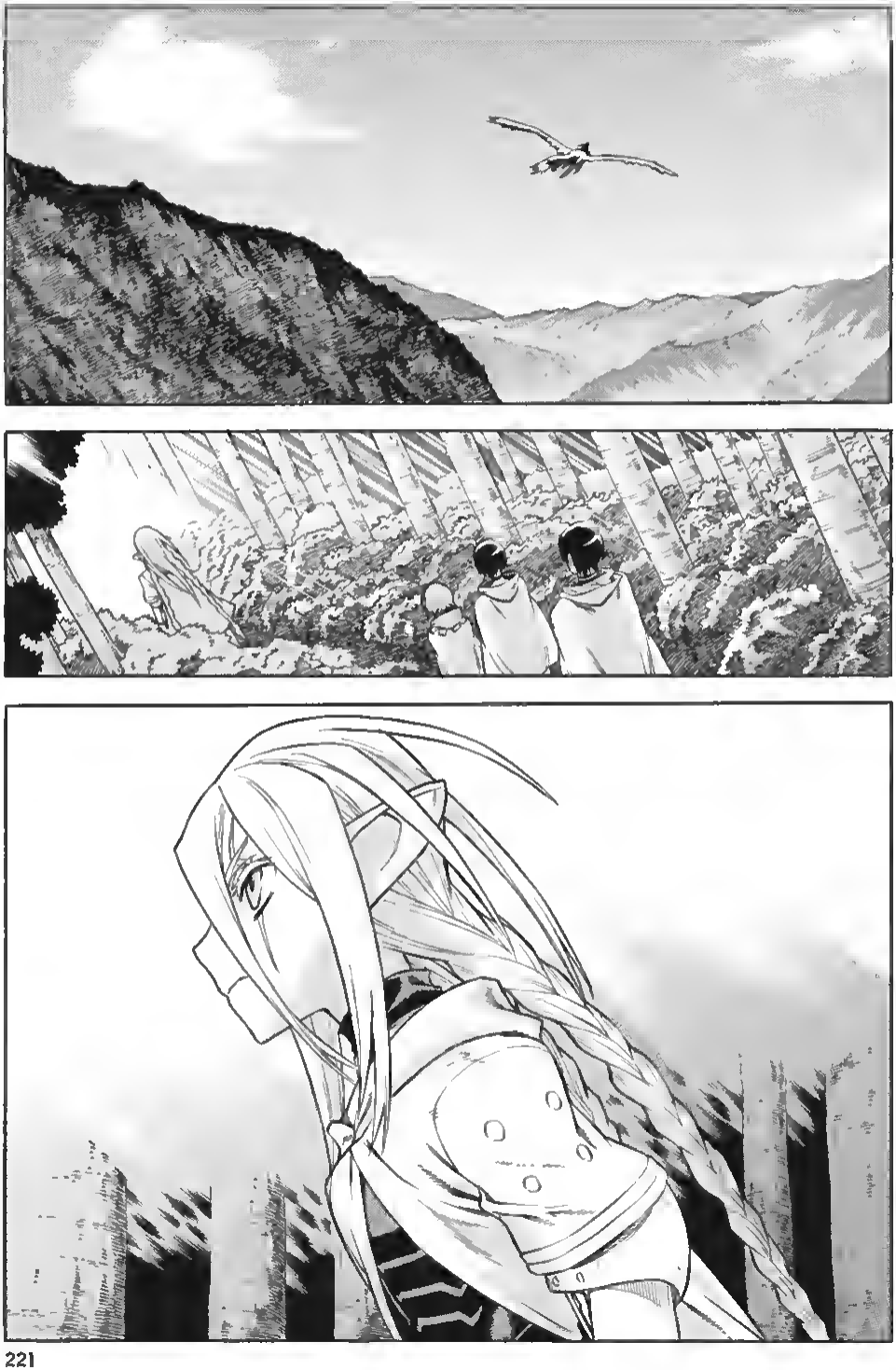
...SIS-
TER...
I...
AHT...
.....
I'M
SORRY...
SISTER...
SO
YOU'VE
DECIDED,
AHT.
YOU'RE
GOING
WITH
HIM...
...BUT...
I'M SURE
SOMEONE AS
UNREFINED
AND WILD AS
ME WOULDN'T
BE HIS FIRST
CHOICE.....
KÖIN-
ZELL...

A FEW DAYS LATER

!!
LEAVING ALREADY, KÖIN-ZELL?

...THANKS FOR EVERY-THING...
...KÖIN-ZELL.
SORRY, BUT...
...I'VE GOT SOMEONE I NEED TO PROTECT NOW.
BUT SOMEHOW... I'LL REPAY YOUR KINDNESS IN MY OWN WAY SOMEDAY.
.....?
WHAT DO YOU...?
...TAKE CARE OF LADY AHT FOR ME.

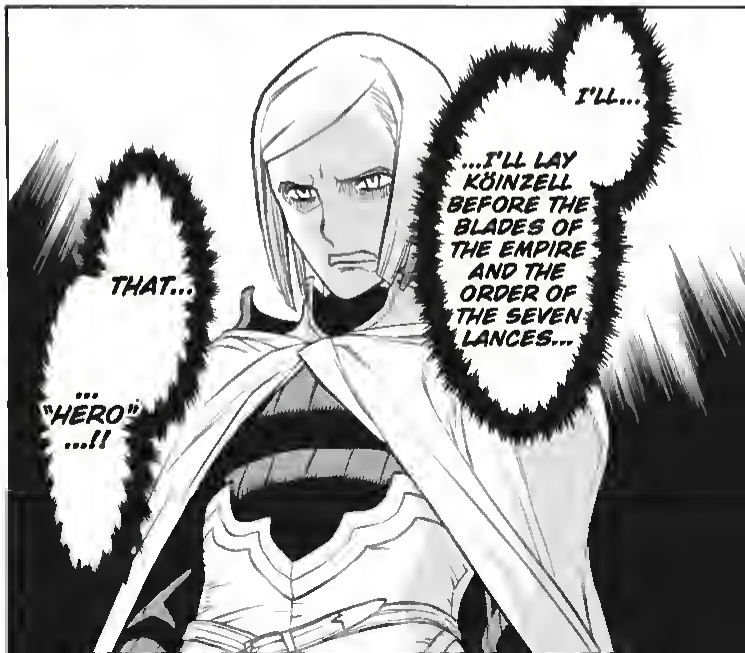


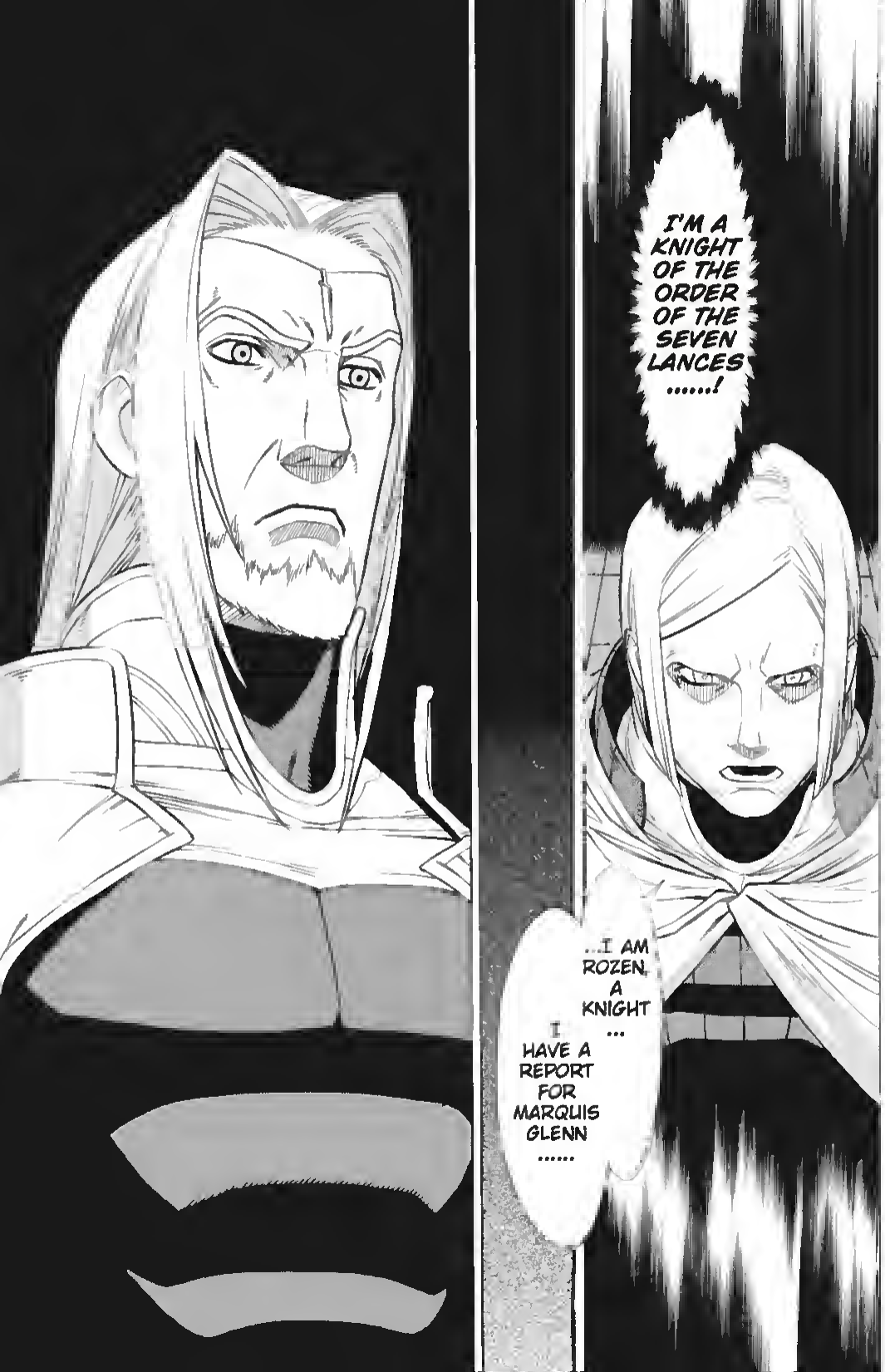


...NOW, THEN. ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE SEEN...
ABOUT THIS "HERO OF THE BORDER-LANDS"...
TELL MARQUIS GLENN WHAT YOU KNOW...

.....
...ROZEN.

IF HE'S REALLY THE HERO, THEN ...!!
GIRIRI COLENCHO
..... BUT ...


I'LL...
...I'LL LAY KÖINZELL BEFORE THE BLADES OF THE EMPIRE AND THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES...
THAT...
... "HERO" ...!!


I'M A KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES .....!
..I AM ROZEN, A KNIGHT ... I HAVE A REPORT FOR MARQUIS GLENN .....

Tha magics used hy Wischtach, tha land of shedows, since time immemoriel, as well es the ertillery created witb those megics—left hahiod duriog tha great wers—bava long fescineted scholers of the empire.

However, given tbet tbese sinister erts were treditionelly wielded by evildoers from Wischtach, presaot-dey users are oftao linked with rebellious fections end hereticel cults. Witbin the empire, ontright use end researcb of these megics is generelly not done.

Tha Wiscbtacbian wizard ganaral, Sogah, brougbt untold snffering upon tbe empire in the greet war five hundred yeers ago, end a cult of haratics rosa up around him. Tha perents of the child who would become Sege Haegen were modern-dey members of tbis cult, so Heegen hed been surrounded by Wiscbtechien megics since bis childbood.

Wben Heagen wes fifteen, his parents' cult wes ell but wiped out by the imperiel ermy for plotting a rehellion. Haegeo survivad and wes teken in by nobles wbo bed ridden witb the militery compeign. Tbesa nobles were from e prominent femily of scholers, so Heegen wes blessed witb en exemplery educetion in tha capital.

Not long after bacoming e scholer himself, Haegen begen to explore the possibility of developing en organizetion beaed eround the magics he hed been surroundad by es e child.

In 3965 A.D., Heagan's research was exposed, and ha wes banishad to tbe borderlands. Soon after, the berrier tbet bed beld beck Wiscbtech for two hundred yaars was smashad, and tha next greet wer begen.

The mossive gep in power was disestrous for the empire's frontline troops, who were annihilatad by Wischtach. As tha imperial war conncil bopelessly looked on the situetion, one frontline commender contempleted using Wischtecb's own megic ertillery egainst tham. Witbout weiting for orders, he eppointed Haegen to tha tesk and maneged to retaka tha frontline.

Thet commander was Genaral Disken of tha Obslont Kingdom. He would go on to become Emparor Largor III.

Haegen

MAGICS

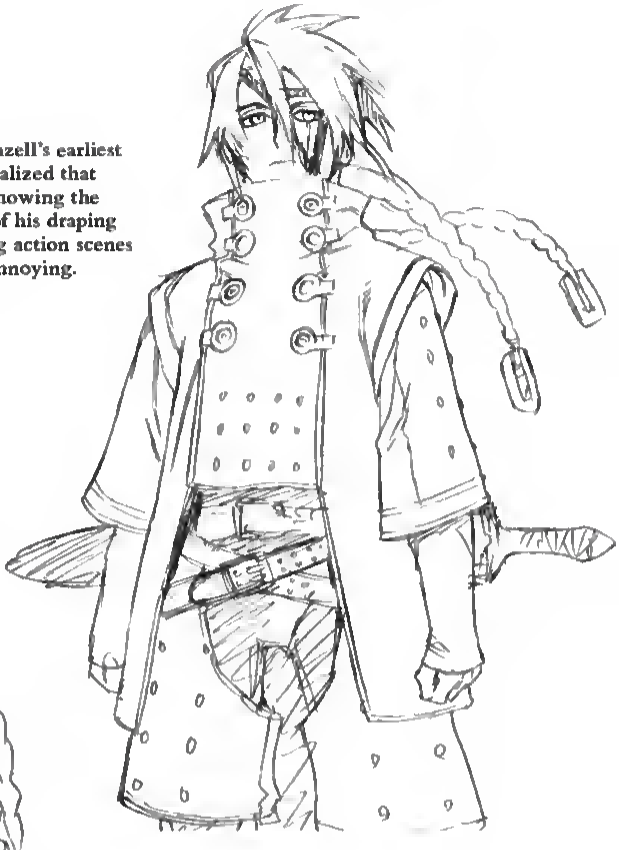
General Disken's plundered artillery brought victory to the empire, and he was bonded in friendship to Haagan. However, in 3974 A.D. after the great war had ended, Haagan was murdered by an assassin dispatched by a certain heretical cult.

The general, now Emperor Largor III, personally led a force to destroy the cult that had murdered his friend.

The magic techniques established by Haagan are now used routinely by the people of the empire with little awareness of the techniques' connection to Wischtech.

On the other hand, there still exist in every corner of the empire various cults that readily employ vile rituals and wicked Wischtechian magics in worship of their dark gods, including the devil himself. Contempt for these groups is especially strong among the ordinary citizens of the empire.

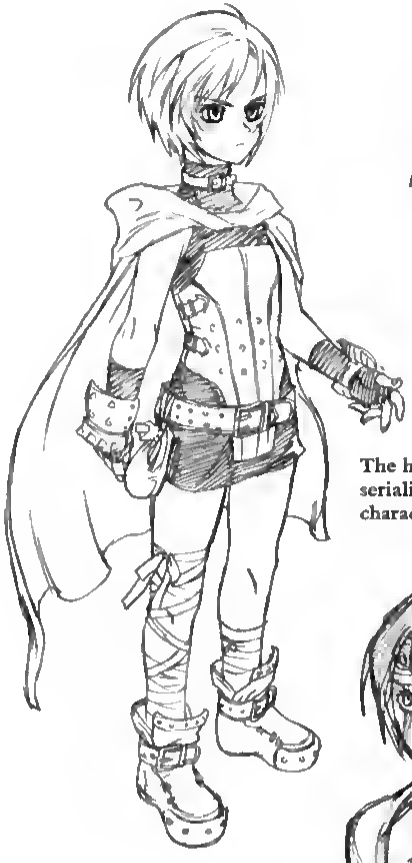
One of the priests of a heretical cult operating in northern Mollan. The cult sought to build an ideal underground community where its members could conduct wicked magic rituals before it was disbanded by Landgrave Schtemwölech.



One of Köinzell's earliest designs. I realized that constantly showing the movement of his draping outfit during action scenes would get annoying.

A version complete with planning lines. This one looks a bit older than the Köinzell I ended up using.

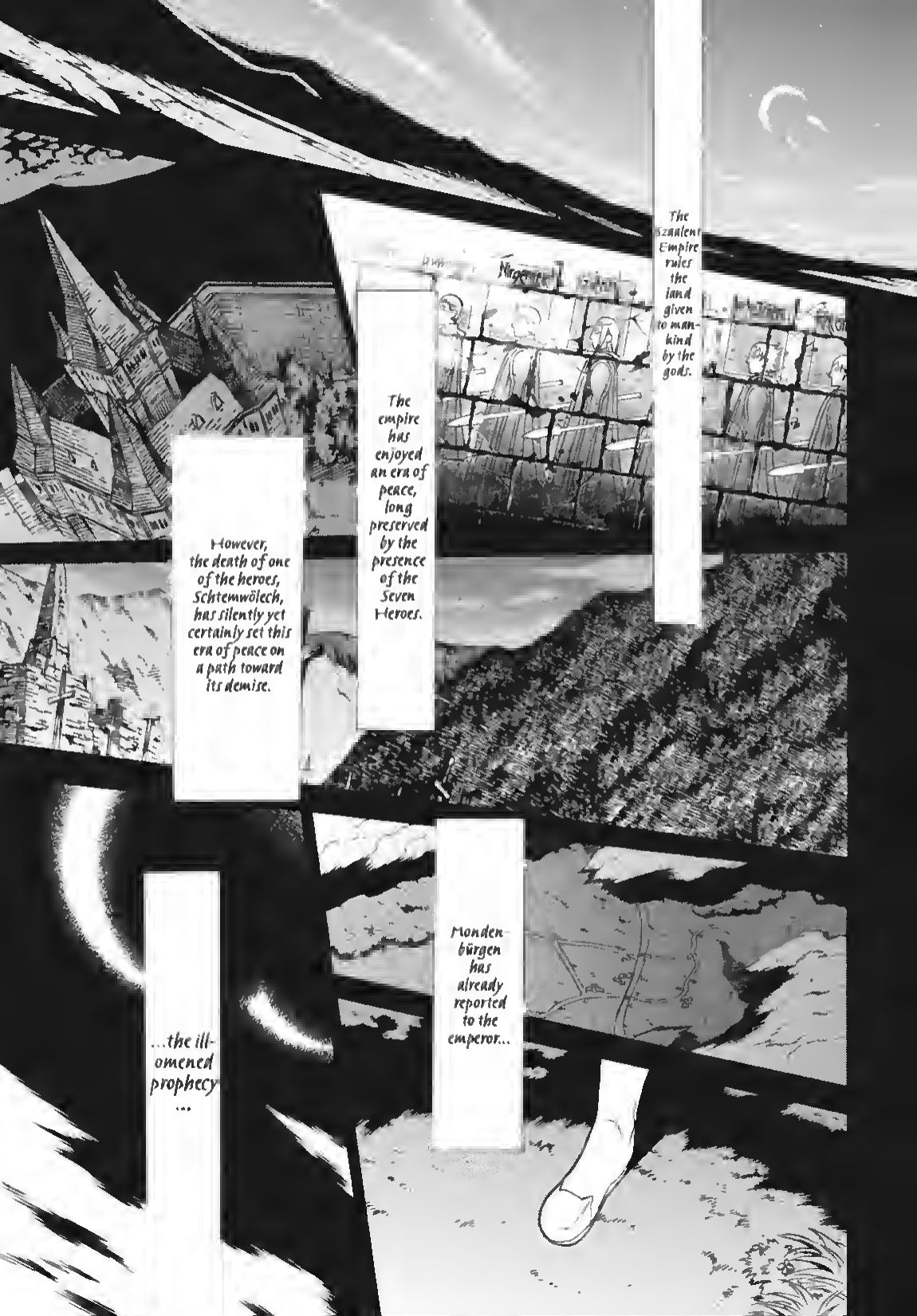
EARLY CHARACTER SKETCHES



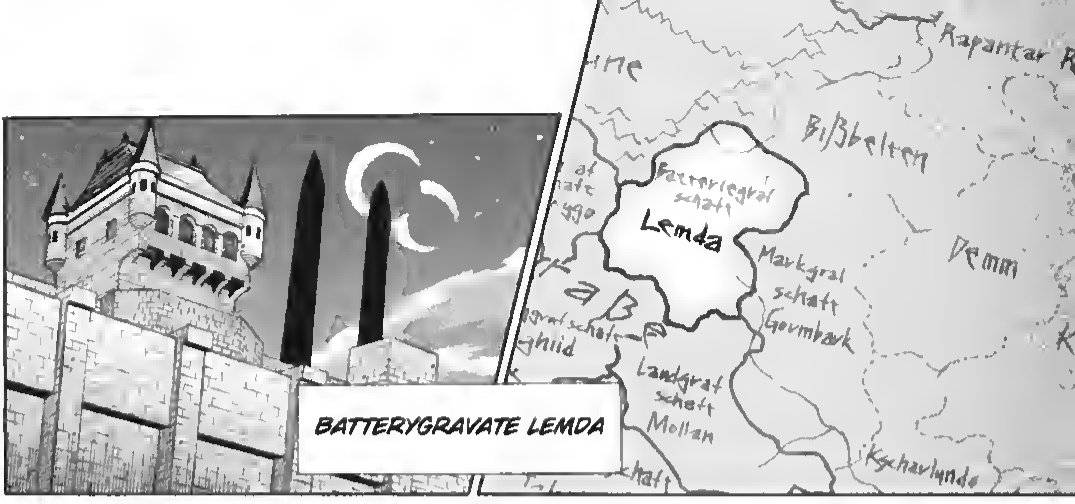
The heroine of the story I suhmitted for the serialization competition. She's hasically the character who would become Aht.

A rough sketch of Ascheriit. This also served as his complete character sheet.
I don't have a sketch of him standing.

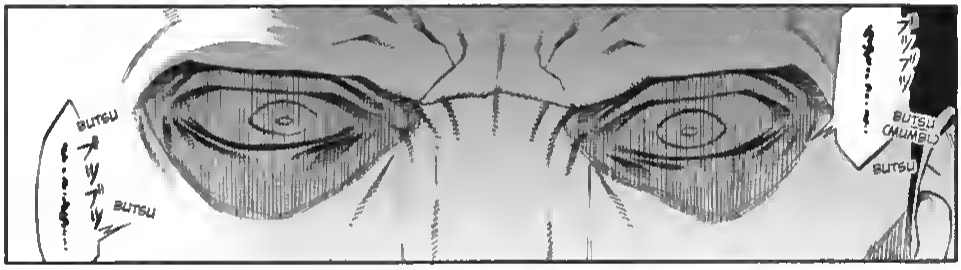
LibelBlatt

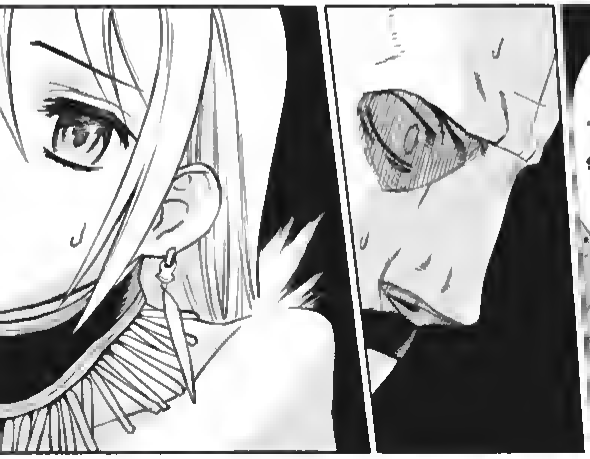

The Szaalen Empire rules the land given to mankind by the gods.
The empire has enjoyed an era of peace, long preserved by the presence of the Seven Heroes.
However, the death of one of the heroes, Schtemwölech, has silently yet certainly set this era of peace on a path toward its demise.
Mondenbürgen has already reported to the emperor...
...the ill-omened prophecy ...

Der Heldmörder
(The Hero-Killer)
◆I◇
A prophecy that foretells...
...a coming age of calamity.


Rapantar
Bi/Bbelten
Lemda
Markgraf schaft Gormbark
Demm
Landgraf schaft Mollan
Kscharlande
BATTERYGRAVATE LEMDA

MMM... YES... THOSE OUTFITS ARE WONDERFUL!
AH. ARE YOU GIRLS READY?
OUR LORD WILL SURELY BE PLEASED.
NOW. OFF TO MARGRAVE BARESTAR'S QUARTERS...


BUTSU
BUTSU
BUTSU
BUTSU
MUMBLE
BUTSU



...LORD BARE-STAR...

KYAAAAAH!!
ZUPA CZASKO

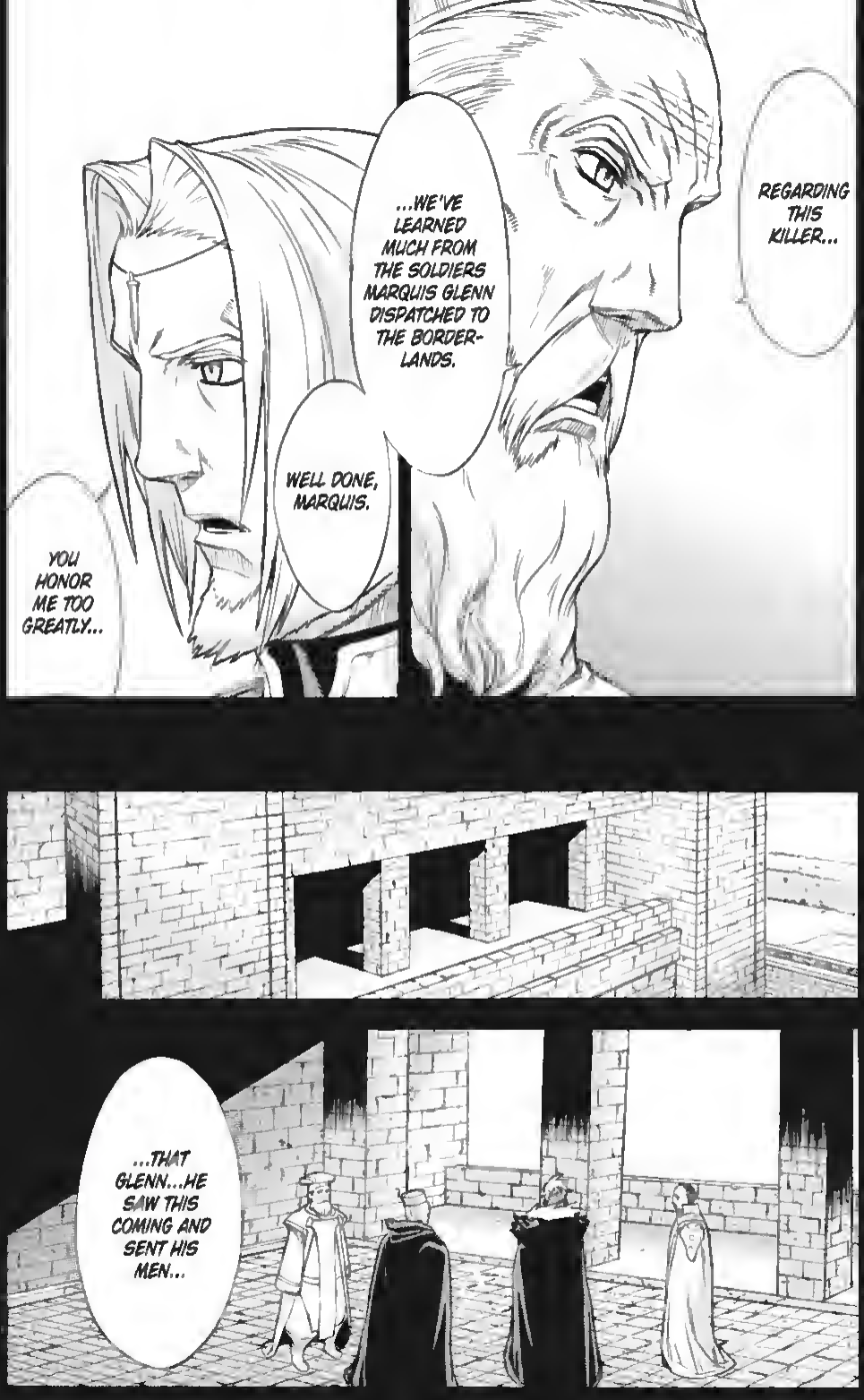
DOCHA (SPLAT)
...WHA...
MY LORD...?
WALGE!!
...YES, SIR!!
L-LOOK AT HER EARRINGS!!
THIS GIRL...
SHE...
...SHE WAS PLANNING TO ASSASSINATE ME!!
AHH...
WELL...
.....

GACHI (CHATTER)
GACHI
GACHI
SHIT ...!
SHIT ...
I WOULD EXPECT NOTHING LESS FROM BATTERY-GRAVE BARESTAR, ONE OF THE SEVEN HEROES!!
B-BUT IT'S A MARVEL THAT YOU MANAGED TO SEE THROUGH THE PLOT. YOU'RE SO OBSERVANT, MY LORD!
YES!
SHE MUST HAVE BEEN AN ASSASSIN! NO QUESTION!
I WILL GO AND DEAL WITH THE SOLDIERS WHO BROUGHT HER IN!

TWO WEEKS EARLIER
IMPERIAL CAPITAL, SZAALION

157TH EMPEROR OF THE SZAALENT EMPIRE, LARGOR III
I THANK YOU FOR COMING AT MY REQUEST.
THAT SAID... IT'S A GREAT SORROW THAT LANDGRAVE SCHTEMWÖLECH CANNOT BE WITH US TODAY.
AS I'M SURE YOU'RE ALL AWARE...
...THE LANDGRAVE'S DEATH SEEMS AN OMEN OF THE PROPHESIZED "GREAT CALAMITY." ...OR...PERHAPS THE ERA OF THIS CALAMITY HAS ALREADY BEGUN...
HEROES ...
MARQUIS LEBEL-LOND.
MARQUIS GLENN.
BURG-GRAVE NIRGEN-FELED.
BATTERY-GRAVE BARE-STAR.
MOON-GRAVE GÜLLEN-GURV.
DRAGON-GRAVE ISCHÄD-IEN.

THE ONE WHO ENDED LANDGRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH'S LIFE...
...THE ONE WOULD BRING CALAMITY TO OUR EMPIRE... DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO FIND THIS HERO-KILLING REBEL...
...AND PASS JUDG-MENT ON HIM!!
UNDER-STOOD!


REGARDING THIS KILLER...
...WE'VE LEARNED MUCH FROM THE SOLDIERS MARQUIS GLENN DISPATCHED TO THE BORDER-LANDS.
WELL DONE, MARQUIS.
YOU HONOR ME TOO GREATLY...
...THAT GLENN...HE SAW THIS COMING AND SENT HIS MEN...

HE'S A SHREWD BASTARD .....
AND THAT "ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES" OF HIS—
MORE IMPORTANTLY... SCHTEMWÖLECH WAS KILLED. EVEN WITH THE SOLDIERS OF MOLLAN PROTECTING HIM.
GOING BY THE MAP, I'D WAGER...
...YOU'LL BE NEXT...
...BARESTAR.
!
.....
...
I'll
...
I'll...
I'LL SEE THAT REBEL DEAD ....!!
.....
NO NEED TO BE SO SCARED.
C'MON, BARESTAR. IT WAS JUST A JOKE.

UWAAH!
KYAA-AAAA-AAH!
DOGA (SMASH)

HMPH ...
WHAT A DULL LITTLE TOWN...
NO!
LEMME GO!
SHE MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE MURDERING REBEL.
TAKE HER AWAY.
...!
NOOOOO!

WH-WHY...
...WHY ARE MEN OF THE BATTERY-GRAVE DOING THIS.....!?
THEY SAY HE'S A YOUNG HALF-BLOOD MONSTER...
THE HERO-KILLER IS SAID TO HAVE BRAIDS AND A SCARRED LEFT EYE...
WE HAVE TO BE THOROUGH, YOU SEE.
THERE'S A CHANCE THAT THE SCUM WHO KILLED LANDGRAVE SCHTEIN-WÖLECH COULD BE HIDING HERE IN LEMDA.
!
...!?
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!?

GOOD EVE-NING.
HEY.
HEY, GET THIS KID OUTTA HERE.
YES, SIR.
N-NO!
SOME BRAT FROM THE VILLAGE?
HUH ...?
WHO'S THIS GUY?

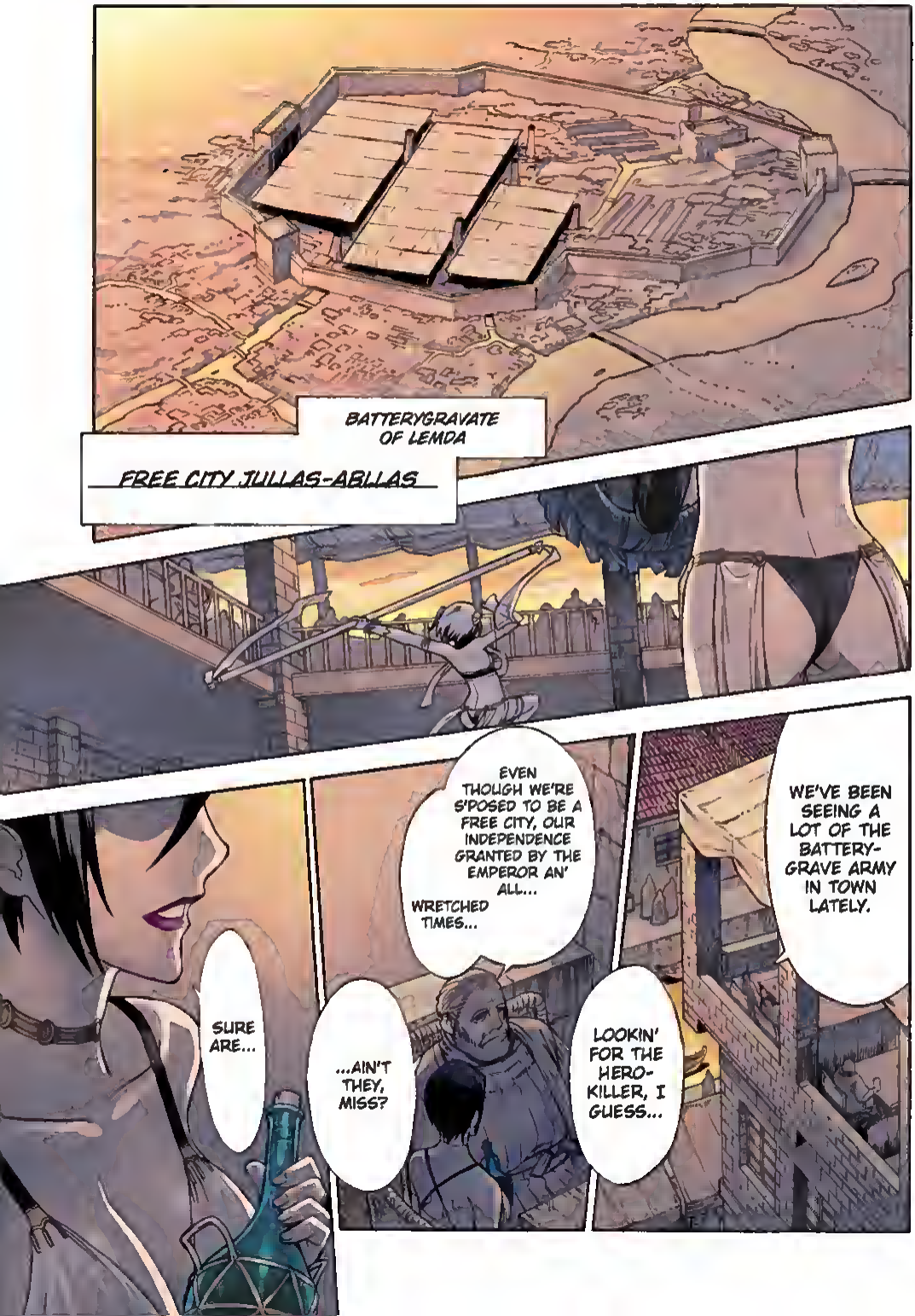
WELL, WELL...
!
SCARRED LEFT EYE... A YOUNG HALF-BLOOD WITH BRAIDS .....!
COULD HE BE...!?

USING A MANHUNT AS A PRETEXT TO HARASS THIS VILLAGE.....?
THE BATTERY-GRAVE ARMY...
...SURE IS A GRADE BELOW YOUR NEIGHBORS IN THE LANDGRAVATE.
THIS BRAT...
...THINKS HE CAN SHOOT HIS MOUTH OFF TO US...!?
WAIT, CAPTAIN!
I THINK HE'S...

SHING
!!?
TA
(DASH)
BYU
(WHOOSH)

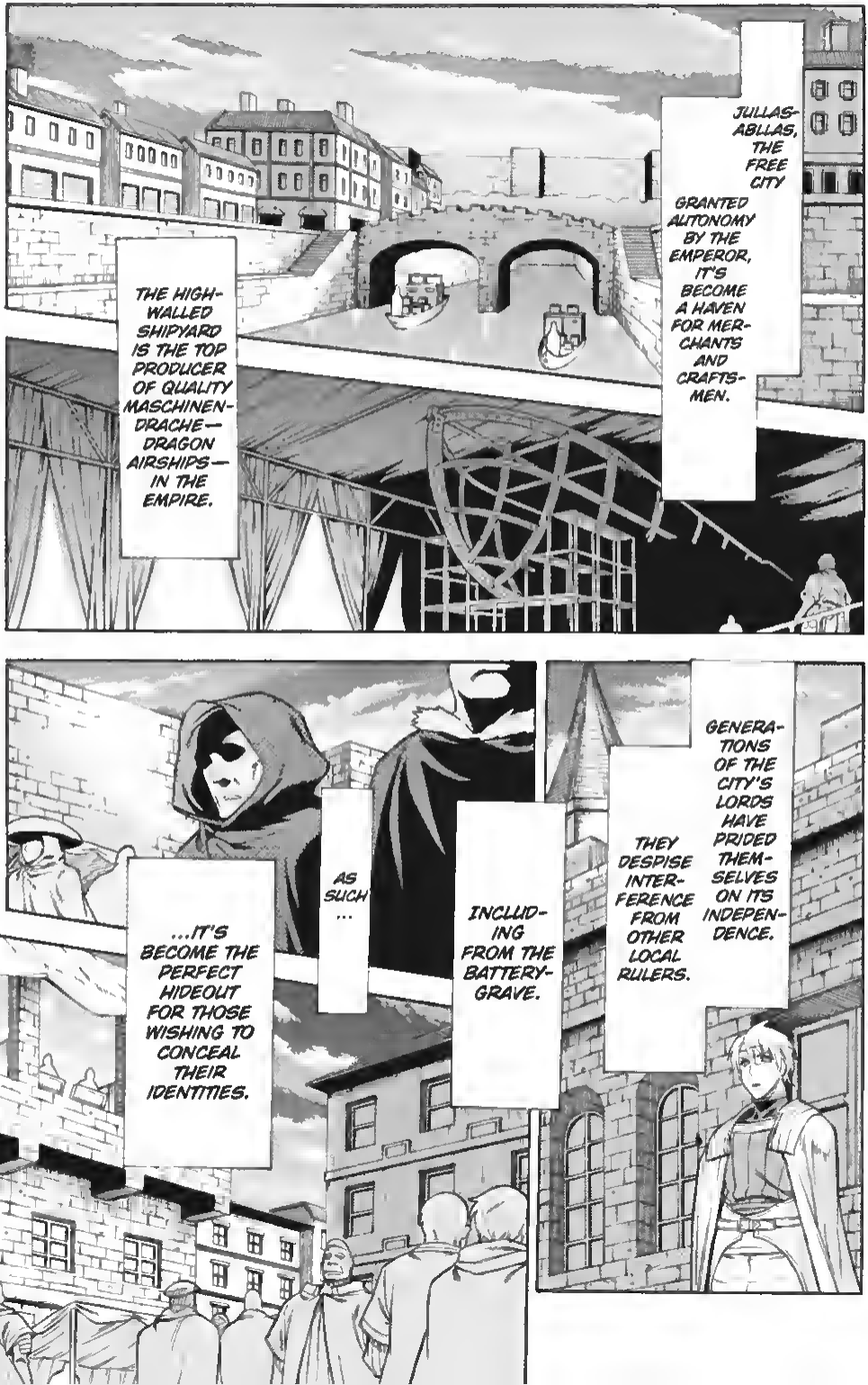
GRNAAAAH!?
DOPA CLOOSH
NICE AND EASY.

BRING ME THAT HERO-KILLING REBEL'S HEAD!!
NNH!
AHH!
HURRY...
HURRY...
UNH!
GH!
YES, SIR...
O-OF COURSE ...!


BATTERYGRAVATE OF LEMDA
FREE CITY JULLAS-ABILAS
WE'VE BEEN SEEING A LOT OF THE BATTERY-GRAVE ARMY IN TOWN LATELY.
LOOKIN' FOR THE HERO-KILLER, I GUESS...
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE S'POSED TO BE A FREE CITY, OUR INDEPENDENCE GRANTED BY THE EMPEROR AN' ALL... WRETCHED TIMES...
...AIN'T THEY, MISS?
SURE ARE...

Der Heldmörder
(The Hero-Killer)
◆II◆

GOOD WORK, YOU TWO!
OH YEAAAH! NICE! YOU NEW GIRLS ARE GREAT!
GETTING SO EXCITED OVER SUCH A TAME SHOW.
...
THESE MEN...
.....
AWW.
YOU BOTH LOOKED GREAT OUT THERE, THOUGH.
HOW DOES THIS KEEP HAPPENING ...?
OHHH... AND JUST WHEN I FINALLY GOT NORMAL CLOTHES TOO...


JULLAS-ABLLAS, THE FREE CITY GRANTED AUTONOMY BY THE EMPEROR, IT'S BECOME A HAVEN FOR MERCHANTS AND CRAFTSMEN.
THE HIGH-WALLED SHIPYARD IS THE TOP PRODUCER OF QUALITY MASCHINEN-DRACHE—DRAGON AIRSHIPS—IN THE EMPIRE.
GENERATIONS OF THE CITY'S LORDS HAVE PRIDED THEMSELVES ON ITS INDEPENDENCE.
THEY DESPISE INTERFERENCE FROM OTHER LOCAL RULERS.
INCLUDING FROM THE BATTERY-GRAVE.
AS SUCH ...
...IT'S BECOME THE PERFECT HIDEOUT FOR THOSE WISHING TO CONCEAL THEIR IDENTITIES.

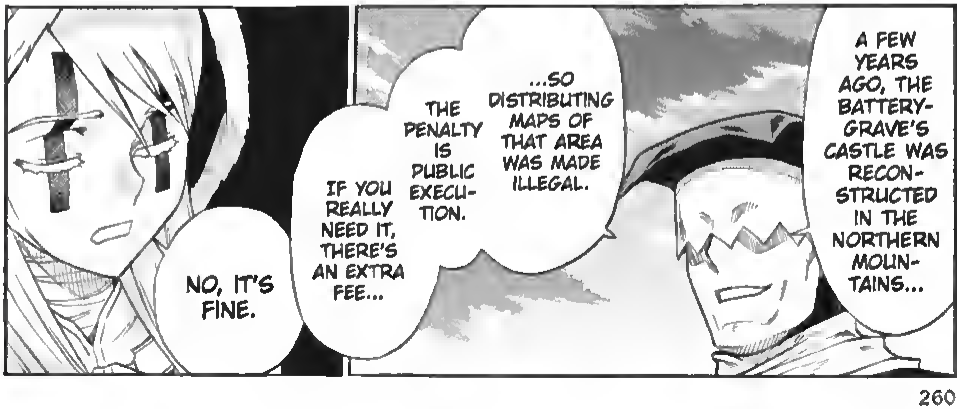
I APOLOGIZE FOR STAYING SO LONG, TITREA.
IT'S BEEN FIVE DAYS...
...BUT WE STILL CAN'T FIND OUR TRAVEL COMPANION...
NOT ONLY DID YOU ALLOW ME TO WORK FOR YOU WHEN WAR FORCED ME FROM MY VILLAGE...
...YOU EVEN SMUGGLED ME ACROSS ...
IT'S FINE...
...LADY ALTEA...
IT'S THANKS TO YOU THAT I'M EVEN HERE...
NOT A SINGLE DAY HAS PASSED...
...WHEN I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT HOW GRATEFUL I AM TO YOU.
REALLY ...
...I SHOULD APOLOGIZE FOR PUTTING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS TO WORK...
NOT AT ALL.
I WOULDN'T FEEL RIGHT RECEIVING CHARITY.
AND AHT AND PEEPI'S DANCING HAS BEEN SO WELL-RECEIVED!
YOU SHOULD STAY FOREVER!
... NNH ...

WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF BATTERYGRAVE SOLDIERS HE KILLS ALONG THE WAY...
...SO THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT HE'S HERE IN JULLAS-ABLLAS.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE KÖINZELL IS ALWAYS LEAVING US BEHIND...
HE'S SO AWFUL!
.....
PEEPI, MAYBE IF YOU GOT YOURSELF SNATCHED UP BY SOME THUGS...
...HE'D COME TO RESCUE YOU...
WELL?
"WELL," WHAT !?
NO WAY !!
THAT'S RIGHT...
KÖIN-ZELL...
.....

WELL, WELL...
THEY'VE FOLLOWED ME THIS FAR...
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING, MISS.
!

... AGAIN ...?
THE UPPER HALF OF THIS MAP IS MISSING ...

HERE'S WHAT YOU ASKED FOR.
.....

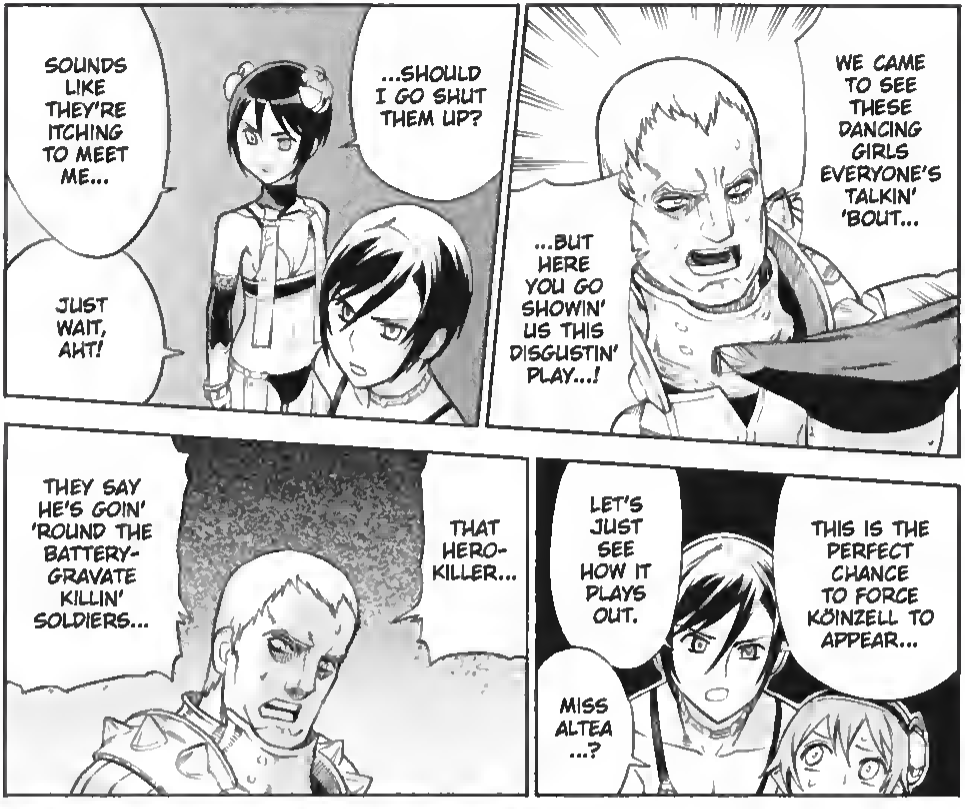

A FEW YEARS AGO, THE BATTERY-GRAVE'S CASTLE WAS RECONSTRUCTED IN THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS...
...SO DISTRIBUTING MAPS OF THAT AREA WAS MADE ILLEGAL.
THE PENALTY IS PUBLIC EXECUTION.
IF YOU REALLY NEED IT, THERE'S AN EXTRA FEE...
NO, IT'S FINE.

GATHERING THE INFO I NEED IS TOUGH GOING.....
WELL ...
...I'LL JUST HAVE TO BE GOOD AND CAREFUL WHEN I MAKE MY ATTACK...
HARK!
AN ODD AND VILLAIN-OUS MAN APPEARS !!
WITH A SCARRED EYE AND LONG BRAIDS...
A YOUNG CREATURE! A MAD KNIGHT!!
DON (BOOM)
UGAAAAH!!
...THIS MAN'S TRUE EVIL NATURE IS REVEALED THE DAY HE SETS FOOT IN OUR HEROIC LANDGRAVE'S LANDS!
THOUGH ONCE, THEY SAY, HE BRAVELY FOUGHT 'GAINST FIENDS IN THE BORDER-LANDS...

RAWRRR!
GRAAAH!!
...WHAT'S WITH THIS PLAY...?
IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE... KÖINZELL...?
THE COSTUME MIGHT BE OFF...
...BUT KNOWLEDGE OF KÖINZELL SURE IS SPREADING...
RRRAH!
HELP US!
HOW TERRIBLE HE IS!
INNOCENT BORDERLAND VILLAGERS, ATTEMPTING TO SAVE THEIR LANDGRAVE...
...HAVE BECOME MERE PREY FOR THIS BARBARIC MONSTER ...!
.....
OHH!
AND NOW, AT LAST...
...HE INVADES THE CASTLE OF OUR GREAT HERO, LANDGRAVE SCHTEMWÖLECH .....!!

LORD SCHTEM-WÖLECH...
AHH ...
OF COURSE, THE LANDGRAVE MAKES A BOLD, MAJESTIC STAND AGAINST THE FOUL INVADER!
YET STILL ...
AHH ...
THE REBEL'S BLADE FINDS THE HEROIC LAND-GRAVE'S HEART .....!!
IMPERIAL SUBJECTS OF THIS FAIR FREE CITY...
...EVEN NOW, THIS MURDER-OUS REBEL LURKS...
WE TOO MUST DO OUR PART TO BRING HIM TO J—
HEY!
CUT THIS SHIT OUT!!

!?
HMM ...?
BATTERY-GRAVE ARMY SOLDIERS ...
THEY'RE DRUNK ...
.....
LIS-TEN UP, YOU!!
GA (GRAB)
Y-YES !!?
ACTIN' OUT THE LAND-GRAVE'S MURDER!?
WHADDYA THINK YOU'RE DOING!!?
WH-WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN...?


SOUNDS LIKE THEY'RE ITCHING TO MEET ME...
...SHOULD I GO SHUT THEM UP?
JUST WAIT, AHT!
WE CAME TO SEE THESE DANCING GIRLS EVERYONE'S TALKIN' 'BOUT...
...BUT HERE YOU GO SHOWIN' US THIS DISGUSTIN' PLAY...!
THEY SAY HE'S GOIN' 'ROUND THE BATTERY-GRAVATE KILLIN' SOLDIERS...
THAT HERO-KILLER...
LET'S JUST SEE HOW IT PLAYS OUT.
THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE TO FORCE KÖINZELL TO APPEAR...
MISS ALTEA ...?

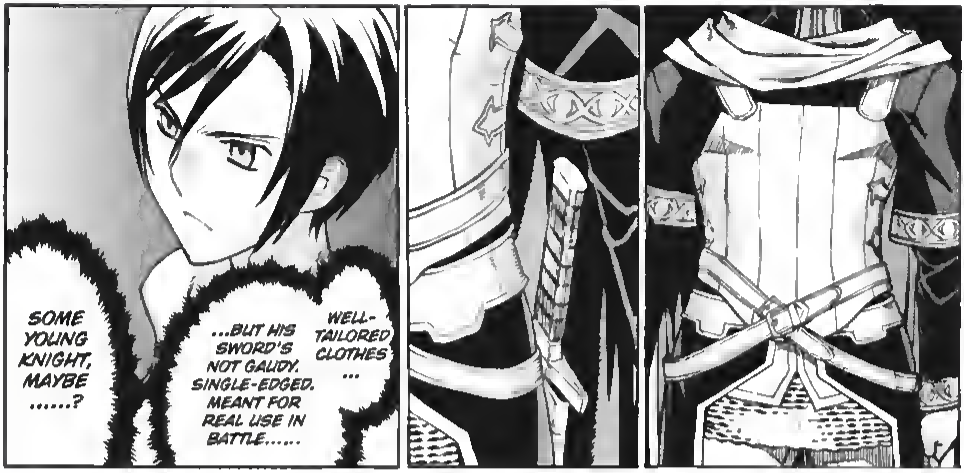
.....
... YOU ...
.....

Y'DAMN TROUBLE-MAKER, STIRRIN' UP REBEL-LION!!!
EEEEE!!?
AHT!!
OH NO!!

!?
DAMN YOU!
SHIT...

GA (GRAB)
WAAAAH!?
!!?
OOSA (THUD)
GWAAH!!

WHOOP...
ぱしっ
PASHI (SNATCH)
MY, MY.
WHAT A GUY.


SOME YOUNG KNIGHT, MAYBE .....?
...BUT HIS SWORD'S NOT GAUDY, SINGLE-EDGED. MEANT FOR REAL USE IN BATTLE.....
WELL-TAILORED CLOTHES ...

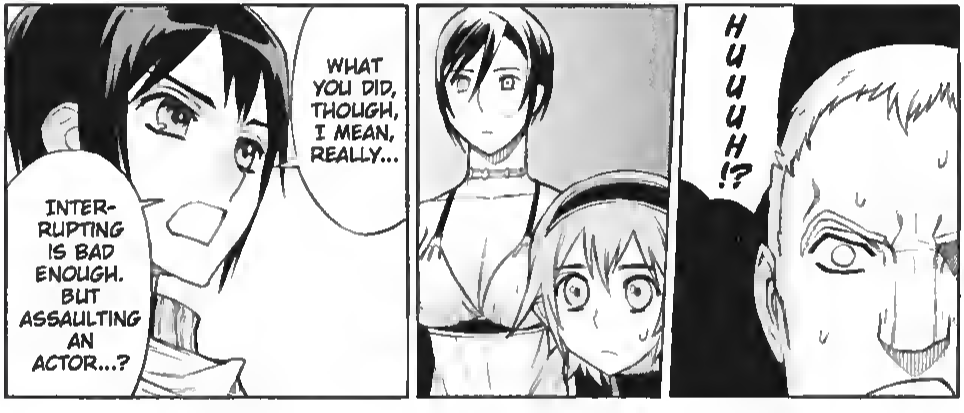
THANK GOOD-NESS.
TH-THANK YOU KINDLY...
N-NO, I'M FINE...

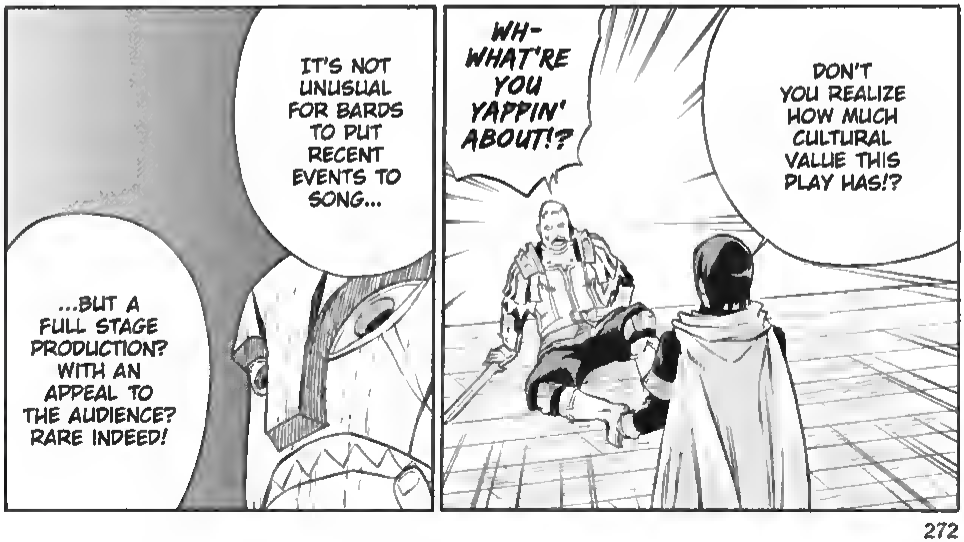
N...
NO...
HUH?
DID HE INJURE YOU?
AND YOU?

MY GOOD ACTOR... ARE YOU HURT?

YOU WERE DANCING HERE EARLIER, WEREN'T YOU!?
...!?
OH!! YOU'RE ...!
HOW DARE YOU...? I'M IN THE BATTERY-GRAVE ARMY—
HEY, YOU BAS-TARD...!
I WAS QUITE MOVED!!
UHH ... THANKS ...
...IT WAS LIKE NO STYLE I'VE EVER SEEN... BEAUTIFUL, THOUGH.
FROM WHAT I COULD GATHER, IT LOOKED LIKE MARTIAL ARTS, BUT...
THAT WAS QUITE AN INTERESTING DANCE!
I'VE SEEN SO MANY INTERESTING THINGS.....
I'M GLAD I CAME SO CLOSE TO THE BORDER-LANDS...
TRULY ...
HEY ...!

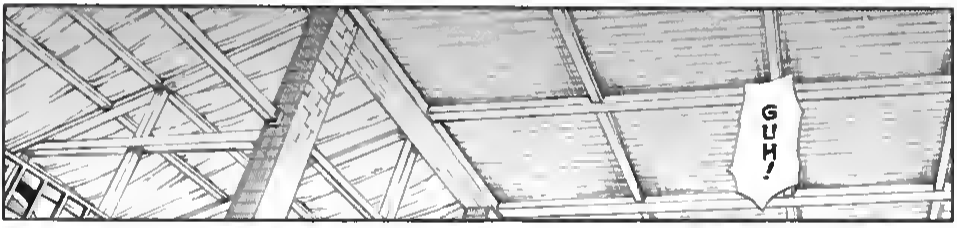
ARE YOU LIS-TEN-IN'!?
!?
...OH. PARDON ME.
I HAD TO GET A LITTLE ROUGH WITH YOU...
I'M EAGER TO SEE HOW THE PLAY ENDS, YOU SEE...

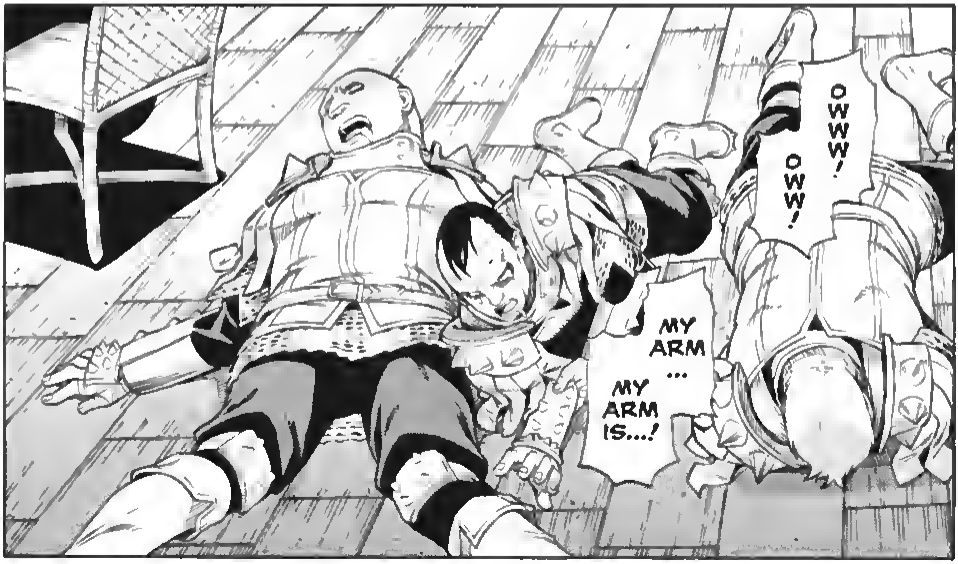

HUUUH!?
WHAT YOU DID, THOUGH, I MEAN, REALLY...
INTER-RUPTING IS BAD ENOUGH. BUT ASSAULTING AN ACTOR...?


DON'T YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH CULTURAL VALUE THIS PLAY HAS!?
WH-WHAT'RE YOU YAPPIN' ABOUT!?
IT'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR BARDS TO PUT RECENT EVENTS TO SONG...
...BUT A FULL STAGE PRODUCTION? WITH AN APPEAL TO THE AUDIENCE? RARE INDEED!

SHIT... WHAT'S WITH THIS BASTARD ...?
MAKIN' A FOOL OF ME.
WHO CARES 'BOUT YER DAMN ACADEMY .....?
I'M SURE THE PUPILS AT THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY...
...WOULD LOVE TO SEE THIS...
THOSE "PUPILS" ARE NEVER GONNA SEE YOU AGAIN!!
JA (CLATTER)

...THAT'S WHERE THOSE THREE ARE...!
!
MUST HAVE TO DO WITH THOSE POPULAR NEW DANCING GIRLS...
HEY! LOOKS LIKE SOME BATTERY GRAVE SOLDIERS ARE GOING WILD AT THE BAR!
!?


GUH!

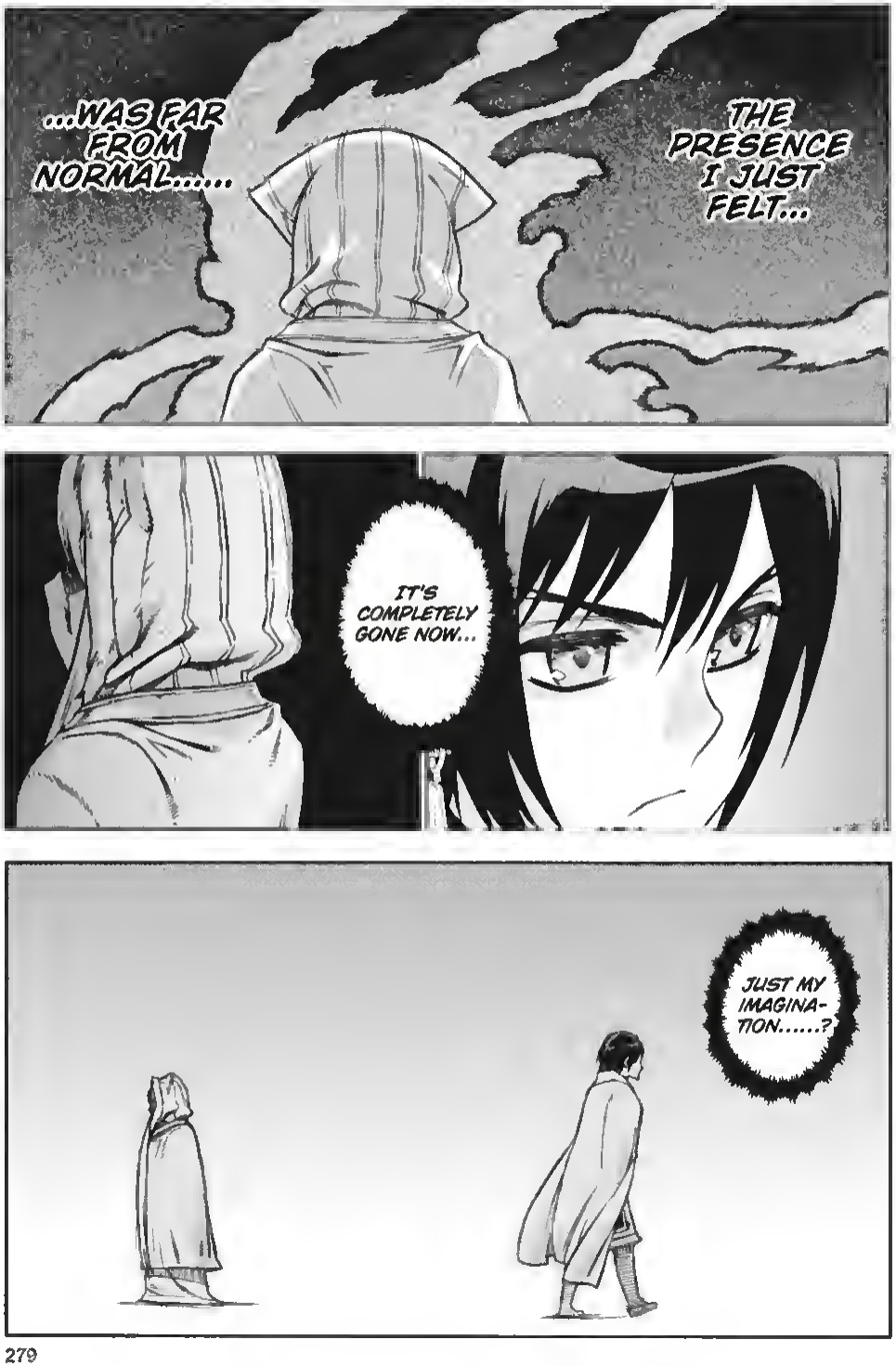

OWWW!
OWW!
MY ARM ...
MY ARM IS...!

YES...OF COURSE ...
YOU'RE WELCOME TO AS MANY AS YOU LIKE...
ARE YOU REALLY GIVING IT TO ME!?
THIS MASK ...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
I'LL TREA-SURE IT!
TRULY, I'M DE-LIGHTED.
WHAT A FIGHTER.
THREE DOWN WITHOUT SPILLING ANY BLOOD.....
I HAVE A SHIP TO CATCH...
PARDON ME NOW...

Der Heldmörder (The Hero-Killer)

◆III◆

!
.....
A GIRL ...?
JUST NOW ...
...WHAT WAS THAT...?

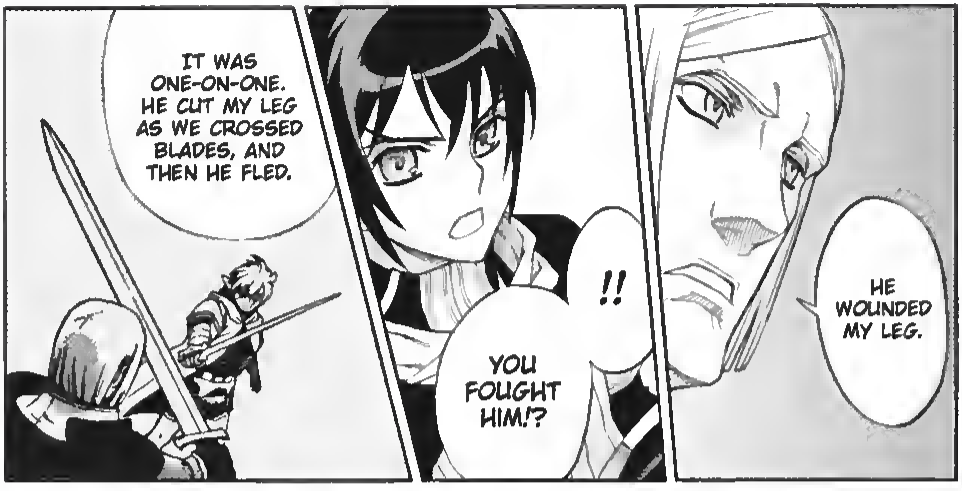

...WAS FAR FROM NORMAL.....
THE PRESENCE I JUST FELT...
IT'S COMPLETELY GONE NOW...
JUST MY IMAGINA-TION.....?

.....
YOU'RE GROWN MEN! STOP CRYING!
OUCH!
OWWW!!
IF IT HAD BEEN KÖINZELL...
...IT'D HAVE BEEN A BLOODBATH, AND THERE'D HAVE BEEN BIG TROUBLE .....
.....
THAT GUY WAS AMAZING ...
YEAH ...
GLAD THAT'S TAKEN CARE OF.
THAT MAN I JUST BRUSHED PAST... SOMEHOW I'M SURE...
...HE'S THE ONE WHO TOOK CARE OF THOSE SOLDIERS ...
THAT MAN...
SO THOSE THREE ARE FINE...
I WAS WORRIED FOR NOTHING ...

DID HE REALIZE SOMETHING .....?
HE STOPPED, AND FOR AN INSTANT...
...THE VIBE FADED QUICKLY, THOUGH. MAYBE THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
...I FELT A RUSH OF HOSTILITY TOWARD ME...
NEVERTHELESS, I-THINK...
...HE'S SOMEONE TO WATCH OUT FOR...

HEY.
NICE OF YOU TO COME AND GREET ME...
...ROZEN.
.....

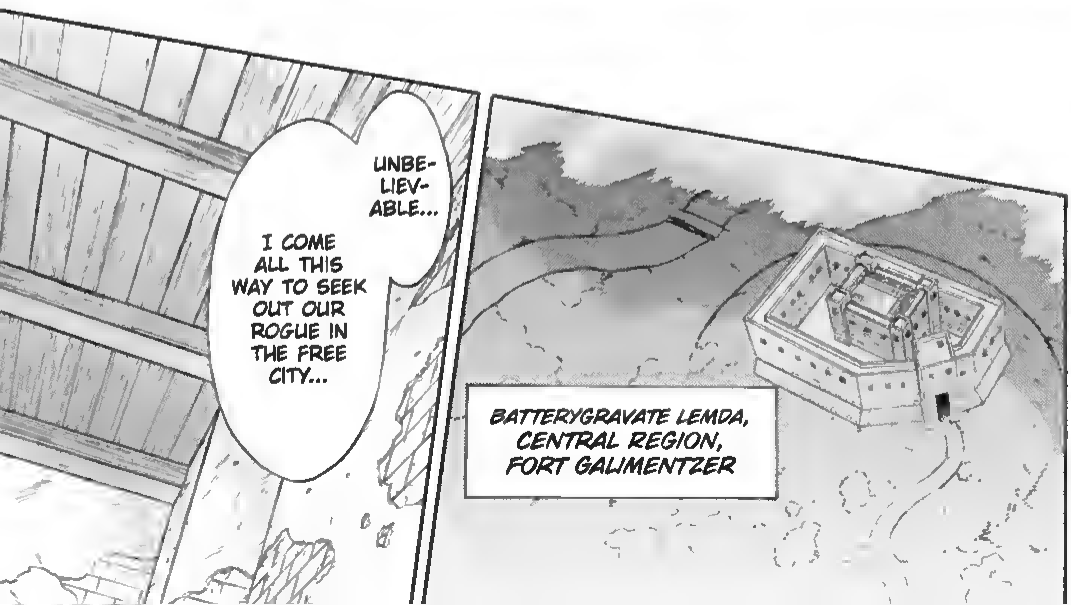
.....
YES.
DID YOU HEAR ROZEN? THEY SAY THE REBEL WHO KILLED THE LAND-GRAVE...
...IS HIDING OUT SOME-WHERE AROUND HERE.
ARE WE JUST GONNA IGNORE THAT?
I'VE PERSONALLY REQUESTED THE ASSISTANCE OF FOUR KNIGHTS WHO ARE AT THIS VERY MOMENT SCOURING THE CITY. DON'T WORRY.
OH YEAH?
ANY-ONE I KNOW?
ELSARIA, ELTZEN, DARISTE, AND KALKRIS.
HA HA!
THE ODD-BALL BUNCH.
THIS HERO-KILLER... IS HE STRONG?
.....YES.


IT WAS ONE-ON-ONE. HE CUT MY LEG AS WE CROSSED BLADES, AND THEN HE FLED.
!!
YOU FOUGHT HIM!?
HE WOUNDED MY LEG.

SOME-ONE WENT EASY ON YOU...!?
IT WAS MY LOSS.
HE WENT EASY ON ME.

GUESS YOU HAD TO GIVE HIM TO THOSE FOUR.....
SO HE'S NO EASY PREY...
.....

WHAT A SHAME...


UNBE-
LIEV-
ABLE...
I COME ALL THIS WAY TO SEEK OUT OUR ROGUE IN THE FREE CITY...
BATTERYGRAVATE LEMDA, CENTRAL REGION, FORT GALIMENTZER

SO. AFTER DRAWING YOUR SWORDS AND CAUSING A SCENE AT THE BAR.....
...ANOTHER PATRON DISLOCATED YOUR JOINTS BUT LEFT YOU OTHERWISE UNHARMED ...?
Y-YES...
AND THEN THE GUARDS OF THE FREE CITY—SKILLED IN THE MARTIAL ARTS AS THEY ARE—KINDLY POPPED YOUR LIMBS BACK INTO PLACE.
LEAVING YOU TO WALK AWAY COMPLETELY UNSCATHED .....
DO I HAVE THAT RIGHT?

.....
SHOW ME YOUR ELBOW.
YES...
THAT'S WHAT HAP-PENED...
?
THE ELBOW THAT WAS DISLOCATED.
HUH?

GOGYA (KRAKKK)
GH!!!!
UGYAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

HEY...YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GO AND—
DON'T BE A FOOL.
SOMEONE IN THE FREE CITY SEEMS TO HAVE BROKEN A BATTERYGRAVE SOLDIER'S ARM.
LET'S MOVE.
THERE.
.....
THIS IS NO TIME TO DITHER.
IF THE MURDERER IS IN THE FREE CITY... THEN THIS IS OUR DUTY AS THE BATTERY-GRAVE ARMY...

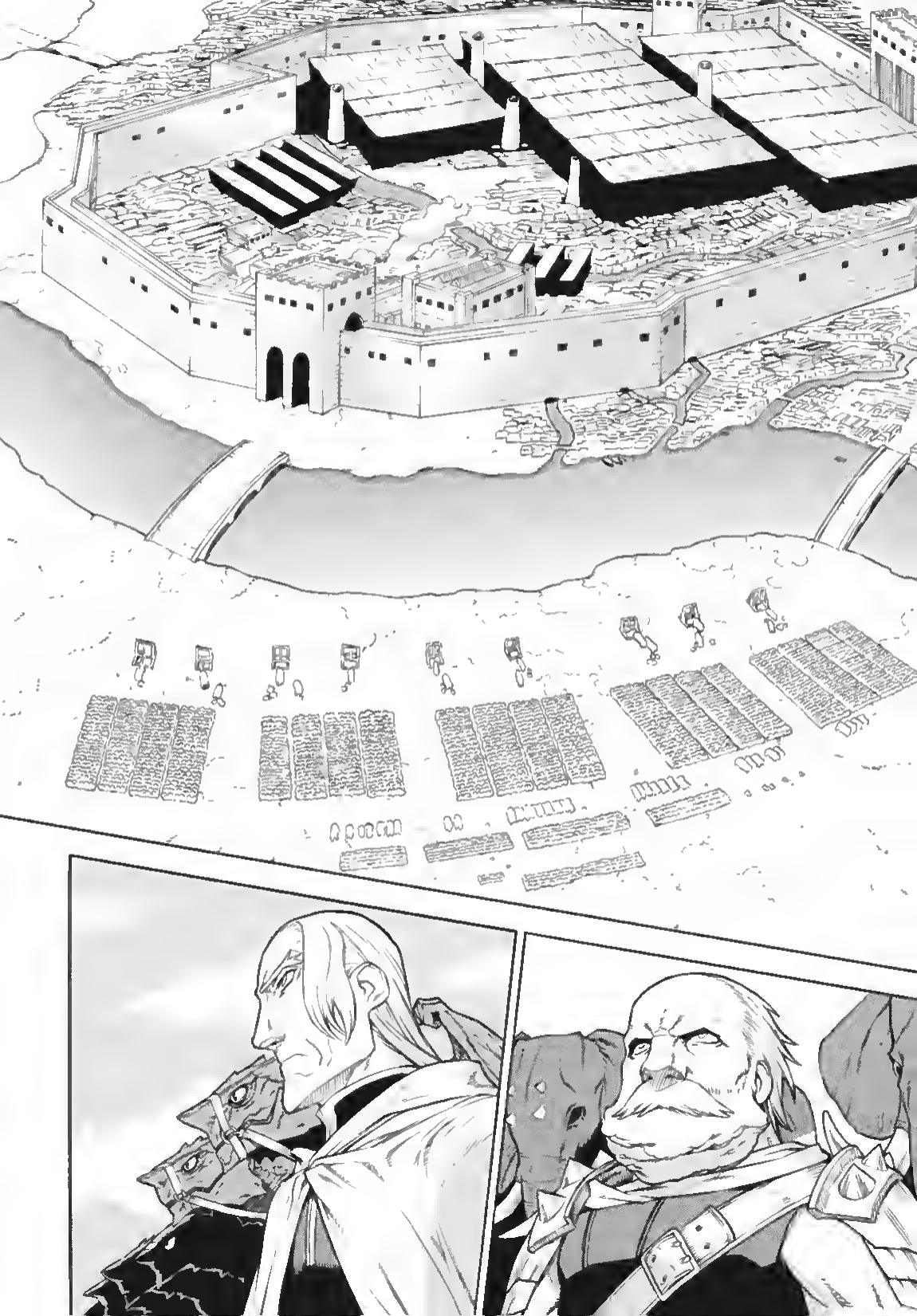
FREE CITY JULLAS-ABLLAS,
PLAZA AT THE LORD'S RESIDENCE
HELLO!
GOOD DAY TO YOU!
MY LORD!
AHH...
THANKS FOR THE INVITATION, BUT I'M EXPECTING GUESTS.
CARE TO JOIN US?
MY FRIEND AND I ARE GOING FISHING.

...TO DO A THOROUGH SEARCH OF YOUR CITY...?
...YOU WILL ALLOW US TEN DAYS...
...I'M GRATE-FUL.
...A BEAUTY SUCH AS YOUR-SELF.
I SEE NO REASON TO DENY A REQUEST FROM.....
YES. THAT SHOULD BE FINE.
MY LORD !!
MY LORD !!
THIS IS BAD !!
ANY SORT OF ACTION AGAINST THIS FREE CITY CANNOT BE FORGI—
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MUCH POWER OR INFLUENCE YOU HAVE.
...PLEASE TAKE CARE NOT TO INFRINGE ON JULLAS-ABLLAS'S FREEDOMS IN ANY WAY.....
HOW-EVER...

DOGO
(SLAM)
eeeee!!
AAAAAH!!?

PUKA (FLOAT)
PUKA
.....
THIS SEEMS... LIKE A RATHER TARGETED ATTACK.
I'M FINE.
MY LADY!
WHA...
...WHAT HAP-PENED!?
...HOW UNCIVI-LIZED!!

THEY'VE SUR-ROUNDED THE CITY .....!!
IT'S THE BAT-TERY-GRAVE ARMY .....



WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS ...!?
WHY THE ARMY? WHY NOW!?
SOME OF MY MEN WERE SEARCHING YOUR CITY FOR THE REBEL WHO KILLED OUR HERO, BUT THEY WERE ATTACKED AND DRIVEN OUT...
!?
SO YOU SEE...
...WE HAVE REASON TO SUSPECT YOU'RE SHELTERING REBELS.
JUST LOOK AT THIS POOR SOLDIER .....
COM-MANDER WALGE!?
NONSENSE! I HEARD THEY WERE RELEASED LAST NIGHT, UNHARMED!
QUIET!
OR CAN'T YOU SEE!?
GYAAA-AAAAH !!

WE'RE GIVING YOU TWO OPTIONS !!
EITHER HAND OVER THE HERO-KILLER...
...OR ALLOW OUR TROOPS INTO THE CITY TO SEARCH FOR HIM!!
IF YOU COOP-ERATE ...
...THE SIEGE WILL END, AND WE WON'T ARREST YOU AS A CO-CONSPIRATOR.
.....
THIS LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE...

WHAT UTTER NON-SENSE .....!
HOW DARE YOU!!?
WHAT IS THE MEAN-ING OF THIS!!?
!!
SHEATHE YOUR BLADE!!
!?
!?
.....
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE...?
... GOOD-NESS ...
WHAT DEPRAVED THUGS...

I AM ELSARIA, A KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES!
HNH?
AH, RIGHT! I AM ELTZEN, OF THE SAME.....
DA-RISTE.
KAL-KRIS.

TO KNOW THAT YOU LOT ARE, LIKE US, IN THE EMPLOY OF THE SEVEN HEROES...
...WHY, IT'S EMBAR-RASSING BEYOND IMAGINING.
YOU NAUSEATE ME!!

Der Heldmörder (The Hero-Killer)

◆IV◆

WITHDRAW YOUR TROOPS AT ONCE!!
YOU LOW-LIFE!!
TO LOOSE YOUR CATAPULTS AGAINST A CITY DEEMED FREE BY THE EMPEROR...
HAVE YOU NO SHAME?
...WHAT'D YOU SAY.....?
WH...

I WILL FORGIVE YOUR ACTIONS UP TO THIS POINT!
BUT IT SEEMS WE'VE STARTED OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT...
...THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO SAY TO YOU, ANYWAY...
?

.....?
WHAT I CAN OFFER YOU IS—
HOLD IT, HOLD IT, HOLD IT!!
WE HAVE A COMMON GOAL—THE CAPTURE OF THE HERO-KILLING REBEL...
I MAY BE ABLE TO HELP EVEN SUCH BRAZEN WRETCHES AS YOURSELVES...
I'VE BEEN GIVEN COMMAND BY THE ORDER OF THE BATTERY-GRAVE HIMSELF...
WHO THE HELL D'YOU THINK YOU ARE, LITTLE GIRL!?
WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME...?
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THIS "ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES," BUT YOU PRIVATE TROOPS OF MARQUIS GLENN SURE THINK HIGHLY OF YOURSELVES.....!!

I AM...
...THE DAUGHTER OF ELECTOR ARCHZALT RAHNCLAVE.
ELSARIA RAHN-CLAVE.
AM I TO UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE AN ISSUE WITH OUR ARRANGE-MENT?
!?
AN ELECTOR'S DAUGHTER .....!?

RAHNCLAVE IS A MILITARY CLAN WHOSE LINEAGE GOES BACK A MILLENNIUM, AND ELECTOR ARCHZALT IS SAID TO BE CONFIDANT TO THE CURRENT EMPEROR....
THE HOUSE OF RAHNCLAVE IS ONE OF THE EIGHT ELECTORS. THEY'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHOOSING WHICH LORD WILL BECOME THE NEXT EMPEROR...
RAHNCLAVE...
YOU DON'T LACK FOR IMPRESSIVE FOLLOW-ERS...
DAMN YOU, GLENN...
...IS ONE OF GLENN'S KNIGHTS ...!?
HIS DAUGH-TER...
IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU!!
I'M GLAD WE FINALLY UNDER-STAND ONE ANOTHER.
PL... ... PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOL-OGY!!
DOSA (THUD)
GYAA-AAH!!
.....

AS WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED, OVER THE NEXT TEN DAYS...
...WE FOUR WILL SEARCH THE FREE CITY FOR THE HERO-KILLING REBEL.
SINCE THEY ARE HERE, I ONLY ASK THAT YOUR TROOPS...
...SEAL THE CITY GATES DURING THE TEN DAYS OF OUR SEARCH.
YOU'VE BROUGHT THEM THIS FAR...
...SO IT ONLY SEEMS FAIR THAT I GIVE THEM A TASK.
YES!!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, LADY ELSARIA!!

.....
MIGHT YOU ALLOW A FEW DOZEN OF MY MEN INTO THE CITY TO ASSIST...?
UM...IF I MAY...LADY ELSARIA... MIGHT YOU...
YES. I CONSENT.
.....
THAT SHOULD BE FINE.
LORD?
WELL.
LET US BEGIN.

WE'LL SURROUND THE MURDERER WHO WOULD THREATEN THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE...
...AND DRAW HIM OUT OF HIDING!!
THOSE FOUR...
THEY STRONG?
.....
NOT AS STRONG AS YOU...

ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO...
...SOME LOCAL LORDS IN VALKRANE REBELLED.
THE EMPIRE DISPATCHED GENERAL KUPALTZEN AND FOUR THOUSAND TROOPS TO SUPPRESS THEM.
BUT A MONTH PASSED WITH LITTLE PROGRESS.
THE GENERAL REACHED OUT TO MARQUIS GLENN FOR REINFORCEMENTS.
THE ONES SENT TO EVALUATE THE SITUATION...
...WERE THOSE FOUR.
YOU WOULD ABANDON THE LAST FORTRESS!?
...A MERE FIFTY MEN REMAIN IN THE GARRISON.
THEY... WON'T LAST ANOTHER TWO DAYS.
GENERAL... YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!!

ST...
...STOP THIS FOOLISH-NESS!!
THE FOR-TRESS IS LOST...
AND IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO THE ELECTOR'S DAUGHTER...
...IT WILL BE MY HEAD.....!!
ENOUGH OF THAT!
YOU...
...INCOM-PETENT!!!
ABANDONING THE MEN IN THAT FORTRESS...
...WOULD BRING GREATER SHAME TO MY FAMILY'S NAME!

.....
JUST MEANS WE GOTTA STAY ALIVE.
OH DEAR... ELECTOR ARCHZALT WON'T BE PLEASED.
LET'S TAKE CARE OF THIS QUICKLY.
ANY WORD FROM THE GENERAL!?
WELL MET!
OHHH! MESSEN-GERS FROM COM-MAND!!
.....WE FOUR ARE...
...YOUR NEW GENERALS.

...AND HER THREE KNIGHTS...

...WAS SUPPRESSED BY A MERE GIRL OF FIFTEEN...

THE REBEL-LION...

HOW-EVER...

...THOSE FOUR TOGETHER...

...COULD HOPE TO WIN AGAINST THE REBEL WE SEEK...

NO LONE FIGHTER...

.....
THEN YOU COULD BE SURE...
ROZEN?
...WHY DIDN'T YOU JOIN THEM YOURSELF?
BY THE WAY ...
WOW. INCRED-IBLE...
...THAT HE WAS KILLED BY KÖINZELL .....
...THEY SAY THE LANDGRAVE WENT MISSING. BUT I'M SURE...
THAT NIGHT, WHEN KÖINZELL SMASHED HIS WAY INTO LANDGRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH'S CASTLE...

FOR AN INSTANT...

...THERE WAS NO MISTAKING IT...

I WAS GLAD FOR KÖINZELL'S VICTORY...!!

BUT...NO MATTER THE SHAME I FEEL... AS I AM NOW...
I SHAMED MYSELF...!
...I'M NOT SURE I COULD FIND THE RESOLVE TO OPPOSE HIM...!
...EVEN IF I WERE TO MEET KÖINZELL IN COMBAT...
...LET IT BE BY EARNEST HANDS ....!!
KÖINZELL... IF YOU MUST FALL...

...SO WHY NOT...LET ME HAVE THE HONOR OF THIS TASK?
!!
THOSE FOUR ALREADY HAVE SUCH AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD...
I'M STILL A LITTLE SHOCKED, THOUGH.

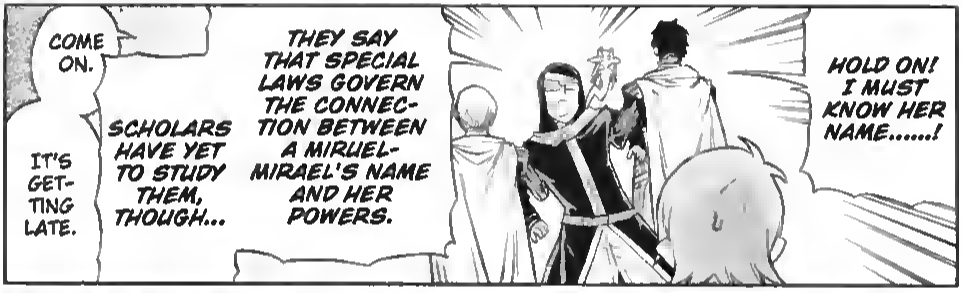
...I COULD KILL HIM ON MY OWN.
AFTER ALL...

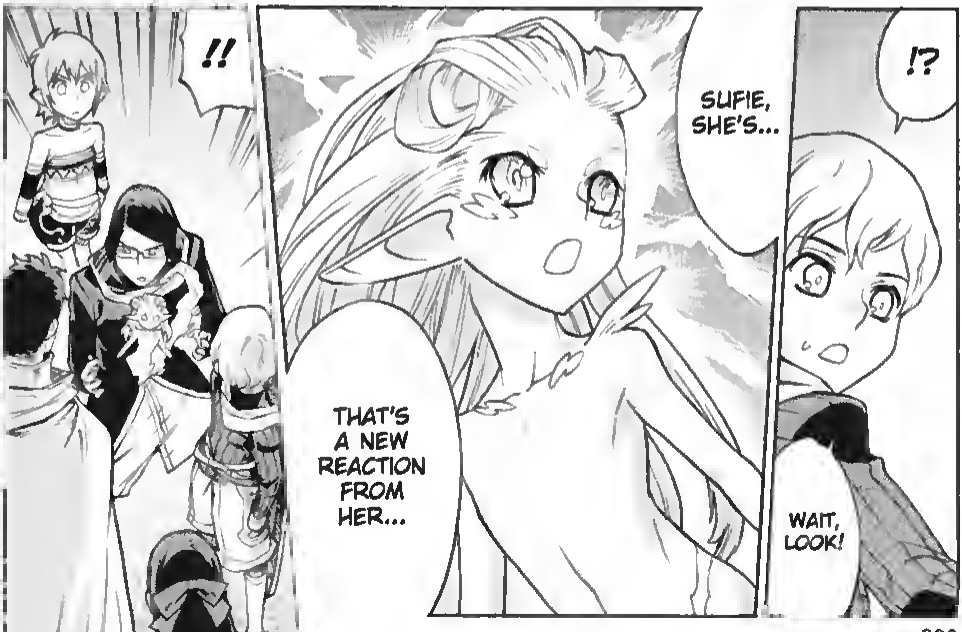
!
WHY THE SOMBER LOOK...
...
ROZEN?
...
NO
...
DON'T MIND ME...
KŌIN-ZELL... WHERE ARE YOU...?
MAYBE HE RAN OFF AND LEFT US BEHIND...
JIWA (TEARY)
THIS ROOM?
YES.
I'M GOING IN!
?
BAN (SLAM)
PAR-DON US!!
WAH !!?

WHO ...
...WHO ARE YOU!?
DA
DA (TMP)
DA
.....
JUST WHEN ...
THIS MAKES OUR TENTH MISS!
?
AN-OTHER FAIL-URE!!
OH DRAT!
...ARE WE FINALLY GOING TO CATCH UP TO THAT HERO-KILLER!?
!!?
?

THESE PEOPLE .....
THEY'RE AFTER KÖINZELL ...!!
IT'S GETTING PRETTY LATE.
I'M SPENT.
CAN'T YOU DO MORE?
I'M AFRAID NOT...
IN A CITY THIS LARGE ...
...EVEN MY WIND FAIRY SUFIE HAS A HARD TIME...
...TRACKING THE SCENT OF A DEMI-HUMAN WITH STRONG FAIRY BLOOD...
THIS SCENT'S NOT THE ONE, SUFIE.
DO YOU UNDER-STAND?
KOKU
KOKU
I APOLO-GIZE FOR STAR-TLING YOU.
WE'LL BE LEAVING.
AH ...!
HOLD ON, MY LADY...
THIS CHILD ...!!
!?

?
YOU'RE... MIRUEL-MIRAEL, AREN'T YOU!?
YOU CAN EVEN INTERACT WITH HOCH ELFE THANKS TO YOUR COMMAND OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION...
I'VE NEVER MET ONE OF YOUR KIND!
TO THINK I'D FIND ONE OF YOUR TRIBE HERE SO FAR FROM THE BORDERLANDS!!
WE'RE LEAVING!


HOLD ON! I MUST KNOW HER NAME.....!
THEY SAY THAT SPECIAL LAWS GOVERN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A MIRUEL-MIRAEL'S NAME AND HER POWERS.
SCHOLARS HAVE YET TO STUDY THEM, THOUGH...
COME ON.
IT'S GETTING LATE.


!?
SUFIE, SHE'S...
WAIT, LOOK!
THAT'S A NEW REACTION FROM HER...
!!

COULD IT BE THE HERO-KILLER AT LAST?
.....
NEVER MIND THAT. WE'RE DONE HERE.
THAT LITTLE ONE...
JUST NOW, SHE...
...SHE PROBABLY SAW KÖIN-ZELL...!
KÖIN-ZELL...
HE'S STILL CLOSE BY...!
OH NO.
THIS IS BAD...
I HAVE TO TELL MISS ALTEA AND MISS AHT!

IT'S TRUE I WAS HOPING TO TAKE MY TIME PREPARING...
...BUT NOW I CAN'T EVEN LEAVE THE CITY...
I COULD ALWAYS FIGHT MY WAY OUT, BUT I STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHERE BARESTAR'S CASTLE IS OR HOW TO GET THERE...
AND I DON'T KNOW HOW STRONG THOSE FOUR KNIGHTS OF GLENN'S ARE...
.....
WHAT SHOULD I DO...!?

SUCH A SWEET-LOOKING BOY.....
HARD TO BELIEVE YOU'RE REALLY THE ONE.
?
!!
SUFIE'S SAYING SHE SMELLS HOCH ELFE BLOOD...
...AS WELL AS TRACES OF A WIDE RANGE OF SPILLED HUMAN BLOOD.
THEY FOUND ME!?
BUT HOW ...!?

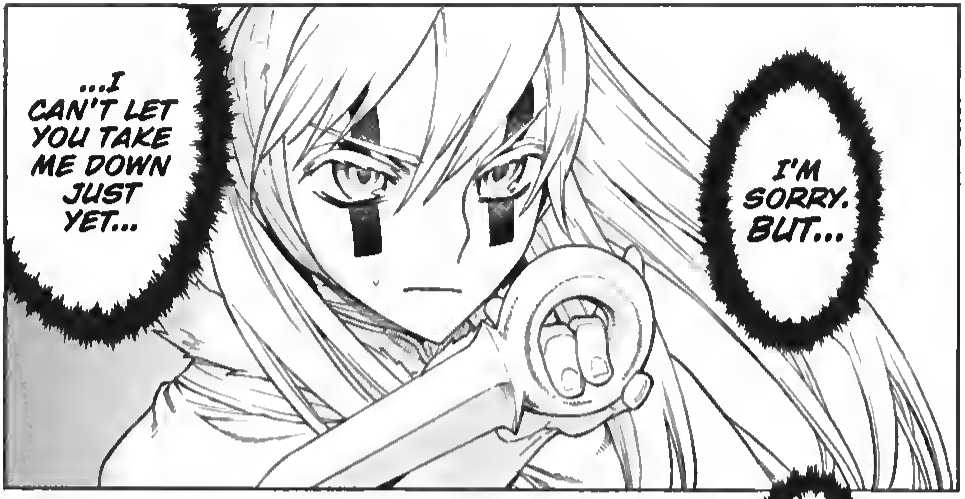
I EXPECT YOU'RE HIDING A SCAR UNDER THAT MAKEUP...
..MR. HERO-KILLING REBEL!
...IT TOOK ELEVEN TRIES!!
BUT WE SEEM TO HAVE FOUND OUR *MARK* THIS TIME...

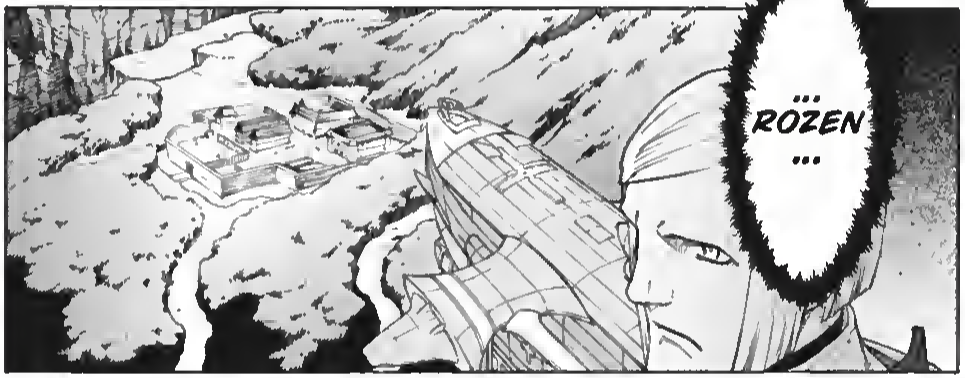
I AM ELSARIA, A KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES.
AS A NOBLE OF THE EMPIRE...
...AND BY PERSONAL REQUEST OF A KNIGHT WHO BELIEVES IN PRESERVING THE PEACE...
...I HEREBY JUDGE YOU FOR YOUR CRIMES, HERO-KILLER!!

EN GARDE !!!
SHU (SWING)
GRIN (CLANG)
SHE'S FAST ...!
HE BLOCKED IT!?

BA (WHOOSH)
ばっ
ば!!
BYU (WHOOSH)
ヒュル
JA (SHINK)
ヤル

WHAT A JUMP !!!
TAN CYNIKO
AS EXPECT-ED...
I SEE...
ROZEN'S THE ONE WHO SICCED THESE FOUR ON ME...
I UNDERSTAND WHY ROZEN SAID WE FOUR SHOULD RUSH YOU TOGETHER!
YOU WON'T GET AWAY!
HERO-KILLER!!


I'M SORRY. BUT...
...I CAN'T LET YOU TAKE ME DOWN JUST YET...


... ROZEN ...

AHH. ALMOST BACK HOME AT LAST.
THESE DRAGON AIRSHIPS SURE ARE FAST.
WELL. THIS SHOULD BE FUN.
I WONDER WHY I'VE BEEN CALLED BACK...?
.....

Der Heldmörder (The Hero-Killer)

V

MASTER... WHY IS...?
WHY IS MARQUIS GLENN AT OUR SCHOOL ...!?
IT SHOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE.
THE MARQUIS WAS ONCE A STUDENT HERE HIMSELF...
THE HALL OF SWORDS
IT LIES IN THE MOON-GRAVATE UNDER DIRECT CONTROL OF THE EMPIRE.
THE ACADEMY LED BY IMPERIAL SWORDS-MANSHIP INSTRUCTOR, GLEA.
Moongravate Roggo
Mondenburgen
Hall of Swords
Battlegravate Lemda
Free City Jullas-Ablias
Frigival-schaft Talvatia
Landgraf-schaft Mellen
Markgraf-schaft Grumbark

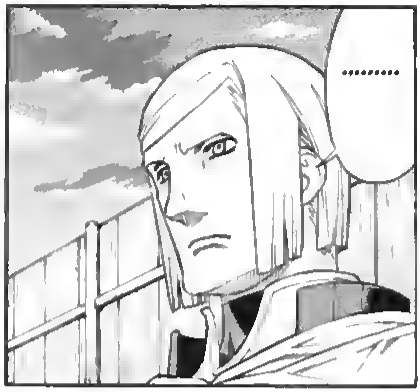
MANY OF HIS PUPILS NEVER RETURNED FROM BATTLE.
IT IS AT THIS SCHOOL...
...THAT BLATT MEISTER LUDIFT TRAINED A NUMBER OF PROMINENT SWORDSMEN DURING THE AGE OF THE GREAT WAR.
AS HEAD INSTRUCTOR, GLEA HAS SPENT TWENTY YEARS...
...RESTORING THE SCHOOL TO ITS FORMER GLORY.
AND THEN ASCHERIT, MEANT TO INHERIT THE TITLE OF BLATT MEISTER, TURNED TRAITOR AND WAS SLAIN...
...BRINGING SHAME TO THE SCHOOL...

MARQUIS GLENN IS INCREDIBLE.
LOOK AT HIS "EIGHT FORMS" ...
MAR-QUIS!
PRE-PARE YOUR-SELF!!
DA CORGHO
WHAT ...!!?

GA
GA
GA
GGHHJ
OH NO...

GAGI
(CLANG)

NICELY DONE...
...MARQUIS GLENN!
.....
YOU'RE BACK...
.....
WHY ...
...WOULD YOU ATTACK MARQUIS GLENN LIKE THAT...?
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!!?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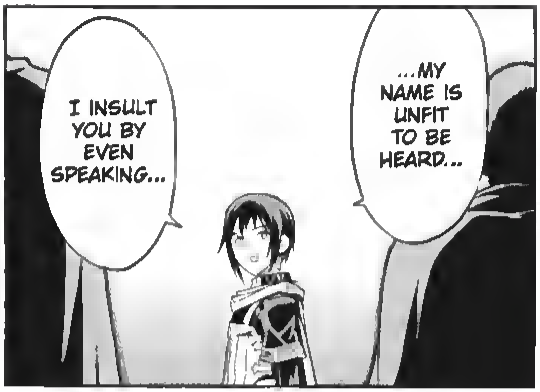
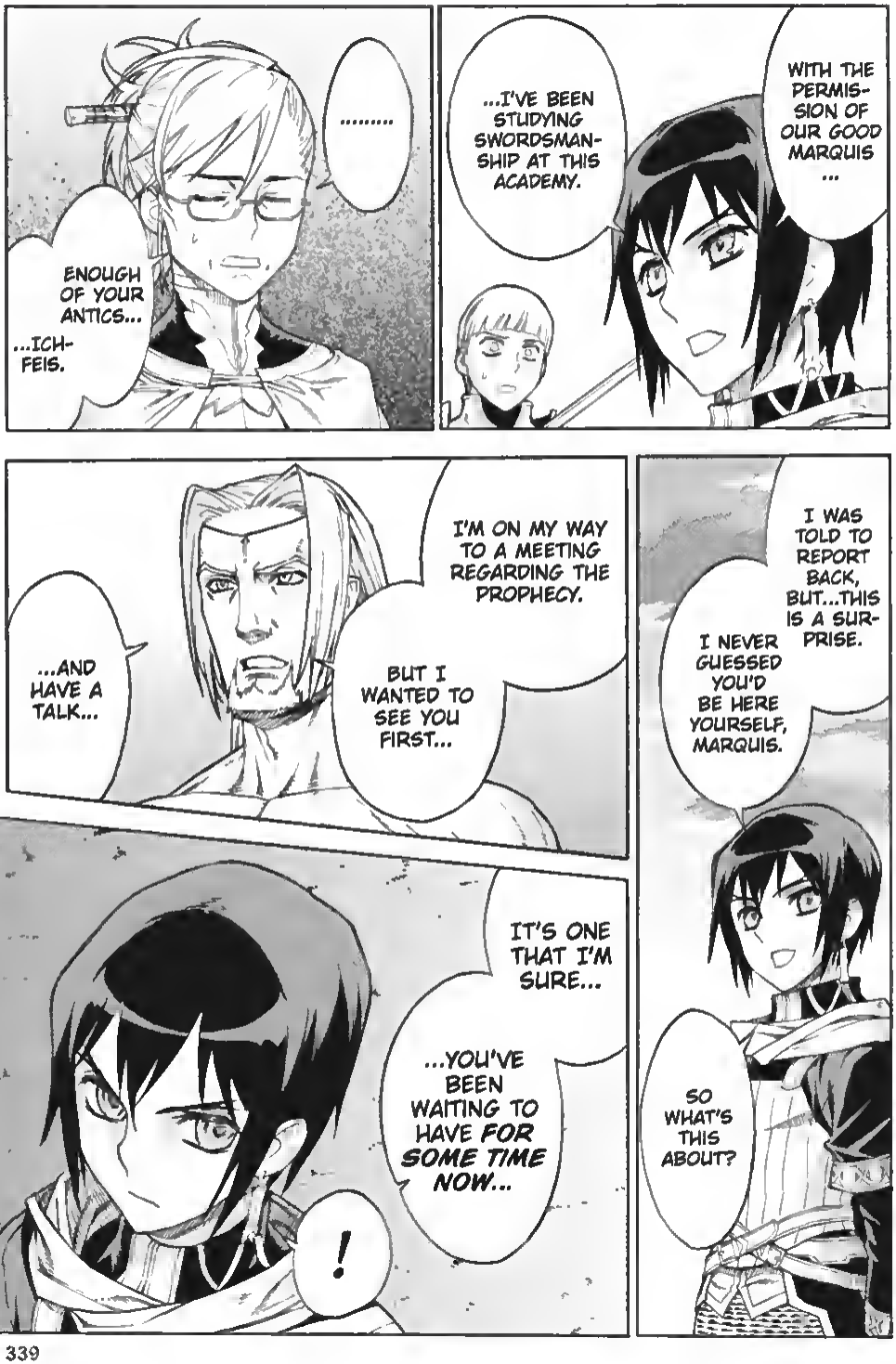

I INSULT YOU BY EVEN SPEAKING...
...MY NAME IS UNFIT TO BE HEARD...

I AM A LOWLY SLAVE KNIGHT WHO ONLY LIVES THANKS TO MARQUIS GLENN'S COMPAS-SION.
I AM ICH-FEIS.

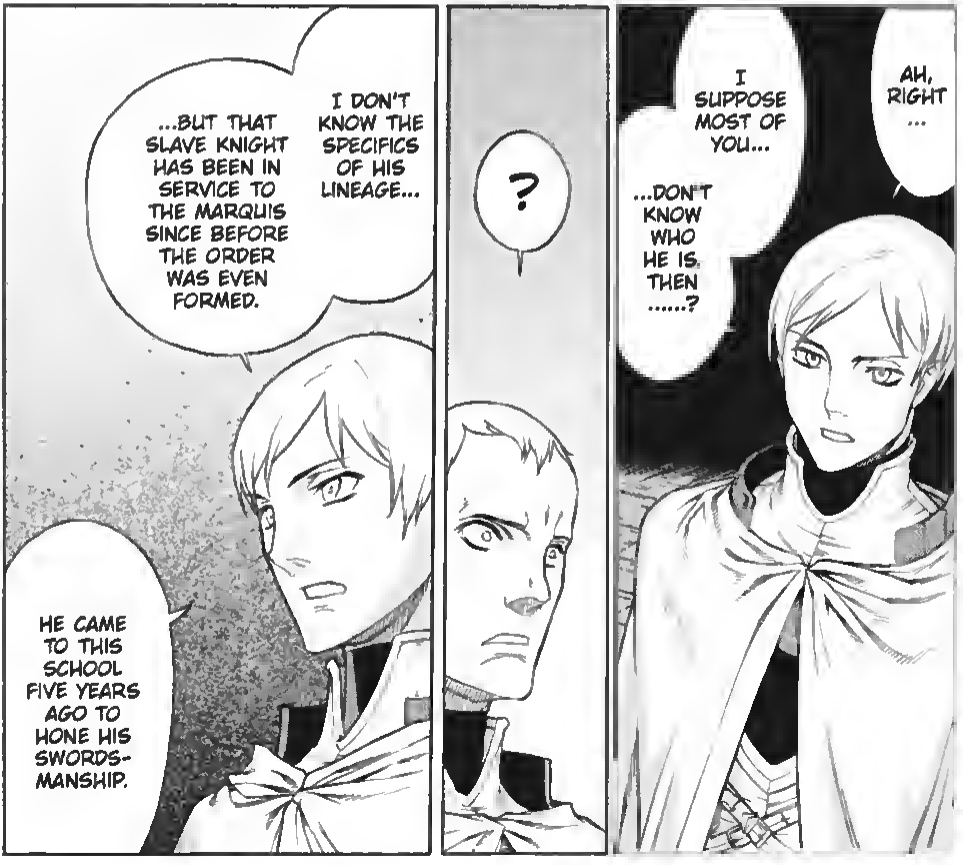

.....
ENOUGH OF YOUR ANTICS...
...ICH-FEIS.
...I'VE BEEN STUDYING SWORDSMANSHIP AT THIS ACADEMY.
WITH THE PERMISSION OF OUR GOOD MARQUIS ...
I'M ON MY WAY TO A MEETING REGARDING THE PROPHECY.
BUT I WANTED TO SEE YOU FIRST...
...AND HAVE A TALK...
I WAS TOLD TO REPORT BACK, BUT...THIS IS A SURPRISE.
I NEVER GUESSED YOU'D BE HERE YOURSELF, MARQUIS.
SO WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
IT'S ONE THAT I'M SURE...
...YOU'VE BEEN WAITING TO HAVE FOR SOME TIME NOW...
!

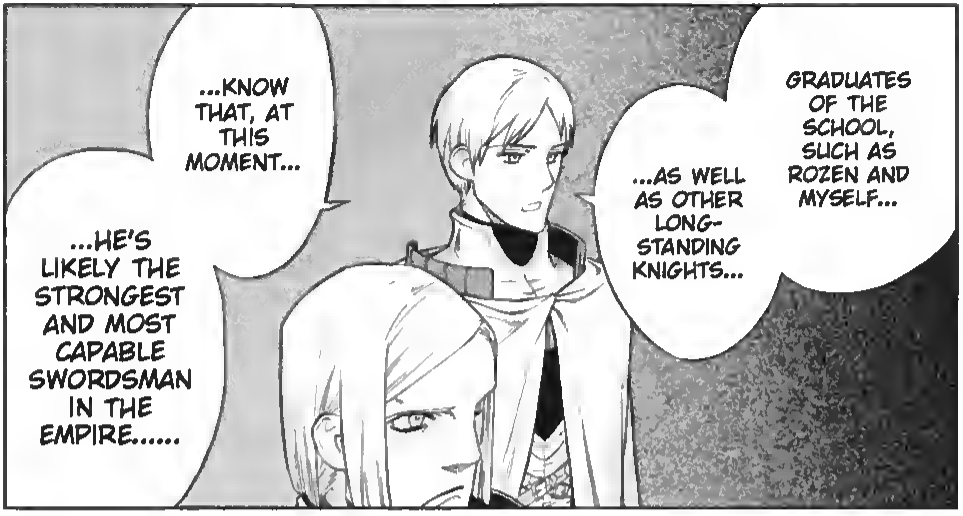
OF COURSE I HAVE.
HE'S A DEMI-HUMAN FROM THE BORDERLANDS WHO MURDERED LANDGRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THIS "HERO-KILLER," YES?
ICH-FEIS?
ACCORDING TO ROZEN, HE'S ALSO THE ONE WHO CONFRONTED YOU...
...AT YOUR ENCAMPMENT ON THE BORDER.
THIS KID...
SAYING THESE THINGS WITH A STRAIGHT FACE...!!
ICHFEIS.
IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS SINCE I ENTRUSTED YOU TO MASTER GLEA.

IT'S ABOUT TIME...
...WE GIVE YOU A MISSION OF YOUR OWN.
.....
ICH-FEIS.
BRING ME THE HEAD OF THE HERO-KILLER.

!
FINISH THIS EVILDOER WHO THREATENS THE EMPIRE...
...AND RECLAIM YOUR HOUSE'S FORMER GLORY. BECOME A NOBLE ONCE MORE.....
.....
LEAVE IT TO ME!!

AND DID YOU HEAR HOW HE SPOKE TO MARQUIS GLENN.....?
THAT IMPUDENT BRAT ...!!
WE'RE THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN LANCES! WHY PASS US OVER AND GIVE THE TASK TO THAT SLAVE KNIGHT? HE'S JUST A CHILD.....!
BUT WHY ...?


I DON'T KNOW THE SPECIFICS OF HIS LINEAGE...
...BUT THAT SLAVE KNIGHT HAS BEEN IN SERVICE TO THE MARQUIS SINCE BEFORE THE ORDER WAS EVEN FORMED.
HE CAME TO THIS SCHOOL FIVE YEARS AGO TO HONE HIS SWORDS-MANSHIP.
?
I SUPPOSE MOST OF YOU...
...DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS, THEN .....?
AH, RIGHT ...


GRADUATES OF THE SCHOOL, SUCH AS ROZEN AND MYSELF...
...AS WELL AS OTHER LONG-STANDING KNIGHTS...
...KNOW THAT, AT THIS MOMENT...
...HE'S LIKELY THE STRONGEST AND MOST CAPABLE SWORDSMAN IN THE EMPIRE.....

YES. THAT BOY...
...AIMS TO BE THE FIRST SUCCESSOR TO THAT DISGRACED CREST IN TWENTY YEARS...
...AND EARN THE TITLE IT COMES WITH...

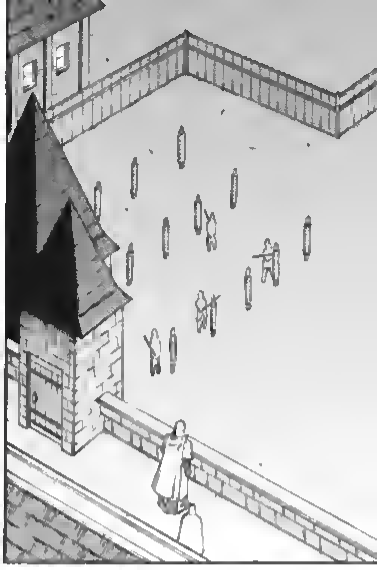
THE STRON-GEST .....?
THAT KID ...!?

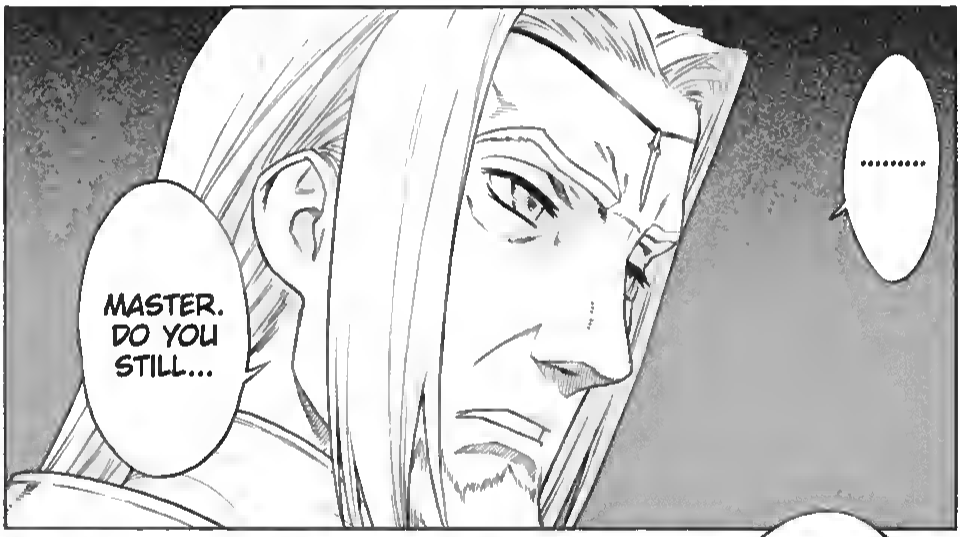
!!!
"BLATT MEIS-TER" ...!!?
HE HAS HIS EYES SET ON REVIVING...
...AND INHERITING THE TITLE OF "BLATT MEISTER."

...YES.
HIS SKILLS FAR EXCEED MY OWN...
I DON'T DOUBT...
RIGHT, ROZEN?

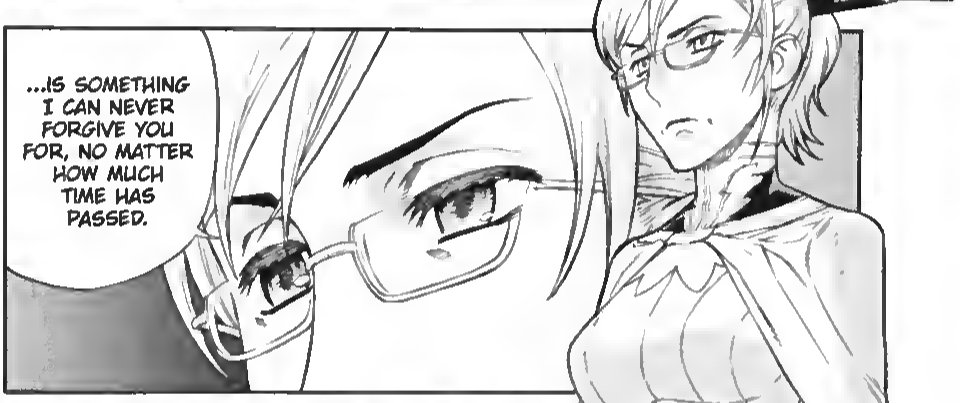
...PERFECT THAT TECHNIQUE AND INHERIT THE BLACK WING AND SWORD CREST...
...THAT SOONER OR LATER, HE WILL SURELY...
...IF HE REALLY REVIVES THAT TITLE, THEN THAT WOULD MEAN...
...THE NEW BLATT MEISTER WOULD JOIN OUR ORDER ON THE BATTLEFIELD, RIGHT...!?
...HE MIGHT'VE BEEN LACKING IN ALL SENSE OF DECORUM, BUT...
.....
THAT WOULD BE AMAZING...!!
WHOA...!

PERHAPS IF YOU HAD SHOWN THIS SORT OF PASSION FOR YOUR OWN TRAINING...
...YOU COULD HAVE BEEN AN EVEN GREATER SWORDSMAN TODAY.
EVEN AT THIS LATE HOUR, THEY ALL TRAIN SO HARD.
OUR FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT.




.....
MASTER. DO YOU STILL...

...RESENT ME FOR KILLING ASCHERIIT .....?



Der Heldmörder (The Hero-Killer)

◆VI◆

MASTER GLEA.
WELL.
I'M OFF.
.....
...GOOD LUCK IN BATTLE.....
PLEASE... BE SAFE...

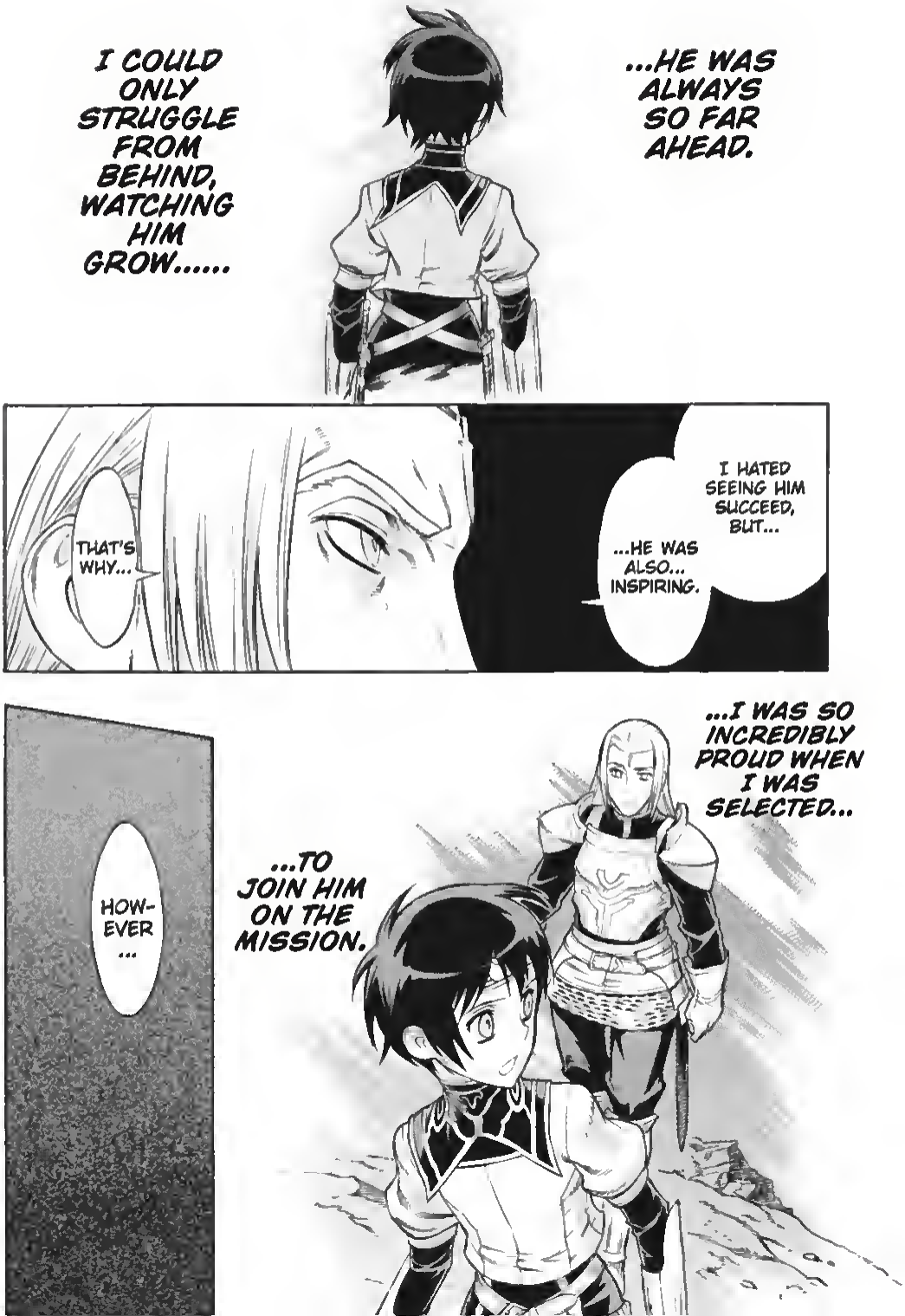
THE BOY MEANT TO INHERIT CONTROL OF THIS SCHOOL...
I'VE WAITED FOUR YEARS FOR HIM...!
THE WAR WITH WISCHTECH IS OVER...
REAL-LY!?
THAT'S WHAT THAT BARD IS SAYING...
?
...HEROES RETURN THE SEAL PRESERVED...
THOSE WISCHTECH ROGUES GOT WHAT THEY DESERVED!
OHHH!!
!!
THEY'RE BACK ...!?
LISTEN, ALL...
...AND REMEMBER WELL THESE NAMES...
OUR SEVEN HEROES, MAY THEY LIVE IN FAME!
THESE SEVEN HAVE NOBLY KEPT US FROM WANT...

GLENN.
ISCHÜ-DIEN.
GÜLLEN-GURV.
SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
NIRGEN-FELED.
BARE-STAR.
AND LEBEL-LOND.
BUT THIS NOBLE TALE IS FAR FROM BRIEF...
...FOR THE HEROES SEVEN DID MEET WITH GRIEF...
FOUR OF THEIR FELLOWS BETRAYED US ALL...
...AND WERE JUSTLY SLAIN TO PAY FOR THEIR GALL...!
I NAME THE FOUR, THOSE AGENTS OF DECEIT—

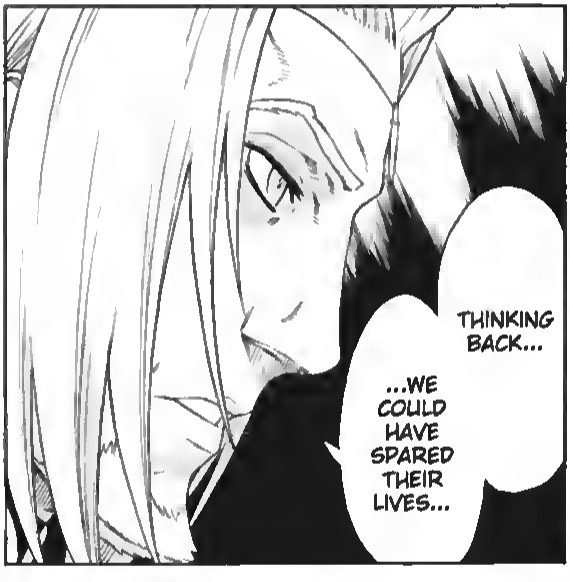
TO THIS DAY, I REFUSE TO BELIEVE.....
...THAT BOY BETRAYED THE EMPIRE AND SIDED WITH WISCHTECH...!
.....
MAS-TER...

.....?
MAS-
TER...
...I...
...HAVE SINNED.
ON THAT DAY TWENTY YEARS AGO...
...I KILLED OUR BRAVE COMPANION— A TRUE HERO.
HE DIED BY MY HAND.
I CAN ADMIT THIS NOW...
MARQUIS GLENN... WHAT ARE YOU...?
THAT ...
...IS MY SIN.

I WAS JEALOUS OF ASCHERIIT.
I WAS YOUNG AND ARROGANT... AND AN EXCEEDINGLY AVERAGE SWORDSMAN— AT LEAST COMPARED TO HIM.
ASCHERIIT'S TALENT WAS ONLY STARTING TO BLOOM...
.....
...AND I ENVIED HIM.
EVEN ON OUR JOURNEY...
...HE MARCHED ON, UNAFRAID OF THE PERILS THAT LAY IN OUR PATH.
HE HAD WHAT WAS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THE MISSION...
EVER SINCE I FIRST MET HIM AT THIS SCHOOL.....


I COULD ONLY STRUGGLE FROM BEHIND, WATCHING HIM GROW.....
...HE WAS ALWAYS SO FAR AHEAD.
I HATED SEEING HIM SUCCEED, BUT...
...HE WAS ALSO... INSPIRING.
THAT'S WHY...
...I WAS SO INCREDIBLY PROUD WHEN I WAS SELECTED...
...TO JOIN HIM ON THE MISSION.
HOW-EVER ...

...ALTHOUGH WE ALL FOUGHT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EMPIRE...
...OUR PATHS DIVERGED.
...WE SEVEN...
...AND THOSE FOUR...
...IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE THE EMPIRE FROM A LOSING BATTLE.
...FOOLISHLY DECIDED TO ATTEMPT NEGOTIATIONS WITH WISCHTECH...
IT'S TRUE...
MORE THAN A FEW OF THE EMPIRE'S LOYAL GENERALS AT THE TIME...
...WERE NOT THOSE OF TRAITORS. THEY ACTED VIRTUOUSLY.
BUT THEIR ACTIONS ...
YES, THOSE FOUR WERE AMONG THE FOOLISH!!


THINKING BACK...
...WE COULD HAVE SPARED THEIR LIVES...

WE HAD NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE THEIR CONVICTION.
I...CAN'T COUNT THE NUMBER OF TIMES I WANTED TO TURN AROUND AND ABANDON THE MISSION.
MY ACTIONS... WERE NOTHING SHORT OF COWARDLY.

...AND PULLED THEM BACK TO THE PROPER PATH...
I TRULY BELIEVE THAT...

THERE WAS NEVER ONE AMONG US...
...WHO EVEN HINTED AT BETRAYING THE EMPIRE TO WISCH-TECH.....
...WHY...
WHY NOW...?
WHY TELL ME THIS NOW.....!?
IF THAT'S TRUE...
...WHY SLANDER THEM AS "TRAITOR-OUS LANCES"...!?

...YOU MIGHT HAVE PRE-SERVED THEIR HONOR .....!
.....NO... I SUPPOSE I HAVE NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE YOU NOW...
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST ...
...WE WERE YOUNG AND PETTY.
WE DID NOT HAVE THE GRACE TO ACCEPT THEM FOR THEIR CHOICES.....
MAS-TER...
...DO YOU HATE ME?

DO YOU HATE ME FOR KILLING ASCHERIIT?
FOR SLANDERING HIS GOOD NAME?
IN LIGHT OF HIS SHEER GENIUS...
...I DOUBT THAT MY TEACHINGS EVER REALLY MEANT MUCH...
BUT...
...THAT BOY...
YES ...
I DE-SPISE YOU ...!!

I WOULD KILL YOU...
...IF I COULD .....!!
I RAISED HIM AND WATCHED HIM GROW...!
THAT DARLING LITTLE BLATT MEISTER...
...MASTER. IF YOU WERE TO COME AT ME...
...I WOULD CUT YOU DOWN.
TO PROTECT THE IDEALS I FOUGHT FOR...
...AND THE RESPON-SIBILITIES I BEAR FOR THE EMPIRE.

ON THAT DAY TWENTY YEARS AGO...
...WE SEVEN MAY WELL HAVE WARPED THE PROPHECY, STEERING THE EMPIRE TOWARD THIS CALAMITY.
WHETHER OR NOT WE WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN INCITING CATASTROPHE...
...I WILL PROTECT THE EMPIRE.
THIS PROPHECY ...
...TELLS OF A NEW AGE OF CALAMITY.
IF ASCHERIIT WERE STILL ALIVE...
...HE WOULD BE HARD AT WORK HERE, TRAINING NEW BLOOD.
HE WOULD HAVE BEEN A GREAT ASSET TO THE EMPIRE IN THAT CAPACITY.

THEREFORE... I WILL NOT LET THE SINS OF MY PAST...
...KEEP ME FROM THE DUTIES I MUST NOW PERFORM.
I...
...WILL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO PROTECT THIS LAND WITH THE POWER I'VE BEEN GRANTED
Lenda
Zighild
...I'M SORRY.
.....NO...
I UNDERSTAND...

WHAT'S MORE...
...I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY, MARQUIS.
I TOO HAVE SWORN MY BLADE TO THE EMPIRE...
SO MY PERSONAL GRUDGES...
...WILL NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF MY DUTIES.
YOU'VE INTRODUCED ME TO ICHFEIS AND HIS TALENTS, AFTER ALL...

WHY THE LONG FACE, ROZEN?
WE FINALLY HAVE REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC.
YEAH... SORRY IF THIS IS OUT OF LINE, BUT...
...YOU MIGHT SOON BEAR WITNESS TO A FIGHT BETWEEN THE HERO-KILLER AND THE NEXT SUCCESSOR OF THE BLACK WING AND SWORD CREST.
EVERY-THING'S READY.
LET'S GO, ROZEN.
.....
TRUE.
YOU'RE RIGHT...

AT LAST...
...ICHFEIS HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WITH STOPPING THE HERO-KILLING REBEL...
THE FORMER AND CURRENT ELITES OF THE ACADEMY WILL CLASH.
ANY SWORDSMAN WOULD CONSIDER THIS A FIGHT FOR THE AGES...
AND I'M SURE THAT ICHFEIS IS THRILLED...
...FOR THE OPPORTUNITY...
ALL I CAN DO...
...IS PIN MY HOPES ON THOSE FOUR...
KÖINZELL AND ICHFEIS.
IF ONLY THEY KNEW...
...ONE ANOTHER'S HISTORY...!!

IT'S UP TO THEM TO PREVENT REAL TRAGEDY ...!!
ALL YOU DO IS EVADE AND RETREAT!
WON'T YOU FIGHT WITH DIGNITY!?

SHIT...
FORGOING MY GEAR FOR THIS DISGUISE WAS A MISTAKE!
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
HMM.
HOW ABOUT WE GIVE HIM A SWORD AND FIGHT FOR REAL?
I'M GETTING SICK OF CHASING AFTER HIM!
HE'S NOT FIGHTING THE WAY ROZEN SAID HE WOULD.....
DO WE HAVE THE WRONG GUY?

DON'T BE ABSURD!!
AHH!
HE'S DODGED AGAIN...!
ROZEN'S GOT SOME INTER-ESTING FRIENDS.
THEY'RE ALL STRONG FIGHTERS WITH WILDLY DIFFERENT STYLES.
YET THEIR COORDI-NATION COULDN'T BE BETTER.
...BUT I HAVE NO TIME TO ADMIRE THEM.
NOW THAT I UNDER-STAND THEIR STRENGTHS, I HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO SHAKE THEM...

...BEFORE WE END UP RAISING THE ALARMS.....
KÖINZELL!!
!?
!!?
AN ALLY !?
A...
...AH!!!

Der Heldmörder
(The Hero-Killer)
◇VII◇

SO THE HERO-KILLER HAS AN ALLY...?
ROZEN NEVER MENTIONED THAT.....
.....

AHT ...
WHY ARE YOU HERE !?
PLEASE STAND DOWN.
..... "WHY" ?
DO YOU... ...KNOW WHO THAT IS BEHIND YOU?
CHA (CHAK)

HE'S THE HERO-KILLER!!
HE SLEW ONE OF THE SEVEN HEROES, LANDGRAVE SCHTEM-WÖLECH.
SO WHAT?
...WE WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LABEL YOU AN ENEMY OF THE EMPIRE!
IF YOU ALLY YOURSELF WITH HIM...
...TO SAVE SOULS... AND.....
A TRUE HERO FIGHTS TO SAVE LIVES...
...HOW THE "HEROES" YOU PROTECT REALLY FIGHT.....?
HAVE YOU SEEN FOR YOUR-SELVES...

...HE WEEPS FOR THOSE HE CAN'T SAVE!!

DA (LEAP)
AND I...!
!!
AHT, NO!!

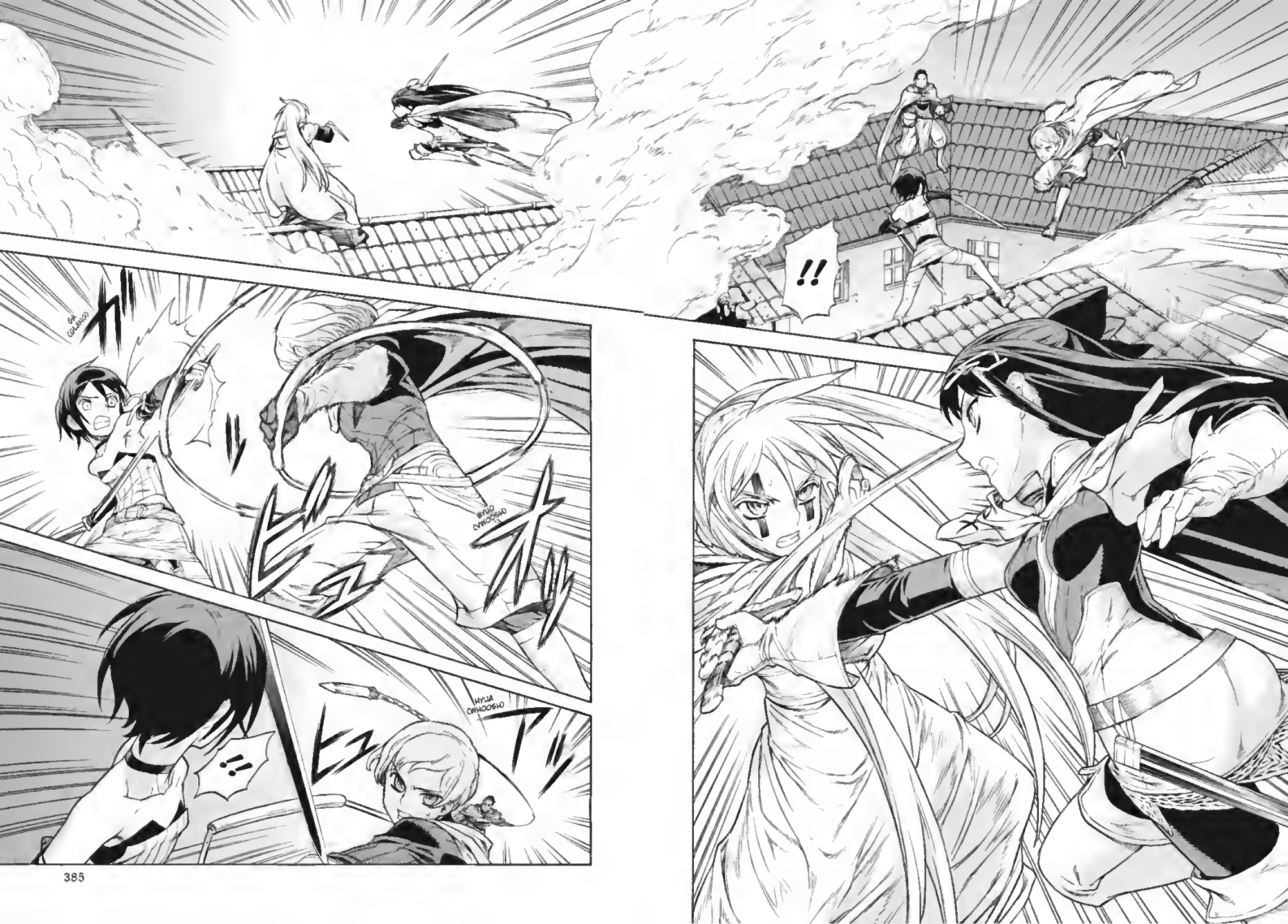
I'VE SEEN THIS MAN!
WITH MY OWN EYES!!
TCH !!

AS A WARRIOR...
...I'LL DEVOTE MY LIFE TO HIS CAUSE...
...BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT MAKES A TRUE HERO!!

GA
GA
GA (SHO)
GET OUT OF HERE, AHT!
IT WON'T DO US ANY GOOD TO FIGHT THEM HEAD-ON...
DAN (TMP)
OF COURSE... YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED THE "HERO OF THE BORDER-LANDS"...
?

I'M NOT SURPRISED YOU ALREADY HAVE A FEW FANATICAL DEVOTEES ...
FANAT-IC!?
ALLOWING A TRAITOR LIKE YOU TO DECEIVE THE PEOPLE AND BUILD A FOLLOWING...
...WILL ONLY INVITE FURTHER DISASTER FOR THE EMPIRE!
SHUT UP...!!
KÖIN-ZELL'S NO TRAITOR !!

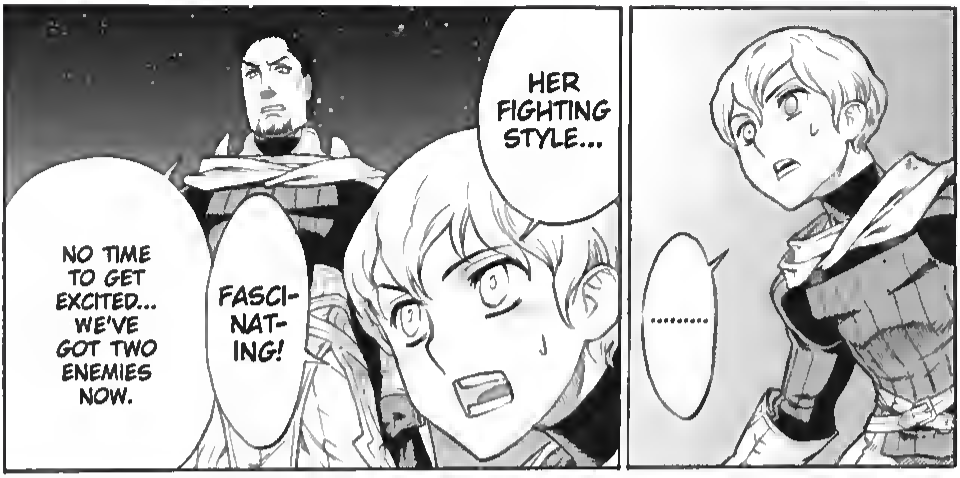
DA CRASH!
THINK YOU CAN TAKE ME!!?
GOBAN CRUMB
GUH!!


!!
ガ
GA
ビュン
BYUU
ビュン
BYUU
ヒュン
HYUU
!?

GUH ...!!
AHT !!
HERE'S ANOTHER !!!
TA (TMP)
GA KIGRACHO
UWAH !!!

GA (KLANG)
DA (LEAP)
!
COMING THIS WAY!?
WAH!

!
ZUDA (DSHU)
HYUGA (WOOSH)
DON'T CHASE HIM, AHT!


HER FIGHTING STYLE...
FASCI-NAT-ING!
NO TIME TO GET EXCITED... WE'VE GOT TWO ENEMIES NOW.
.....

SHIT...
A CROWD'S GATHER-ING...!
.....
YOUNG MAN, WHAT'S GOING ON?
SOME-ONE'S ON THE ROOF...?
WHAT IS IT?

AHT...
...WHERE ARE PEEPI AND ALTEA?
NOT FAR FROM HERE.
ALL RIGHT... YOU NEED TO FIND THEM AND HIDE.
...NO WAY!
I'M FIGHTING WITH YOU, KOINZELL!
YOU THREE WILL BE IN TROUBLE IF ANYONE ELSE SPOTS YOU.
AHT...
...THIS IS SERIOUS ...

YOU REALLY INTEND...
...TO STAND BESIDE THIS MURDEROUS TRAITOR, DON'T YOU...?
DO NOT ...
...CALL HIM A TRAITOR !!

GET BACK HERE!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, AHT...?
DAMN! SHE'S NOT LISTENING ...!
!!
DOGA CSMASH!

I CAN'T EVEN FIGHT AT PROPER RANGE...
AT THIS RATE...!!
KÖINZELL... I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT US GETTING INVOLVED...
OF COURSE YOU DON'T...MY SKILLS ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO YOURS...
BUT ...

A MAN LIKE YOU...
A HERO LIKE YOU...
...A WARRIOR LIKE YOU...
THERE'S NO FIGHTER ALIVE WHO WOULDN'T GIVE ANYTHING TO FIGHT AT YOUR SIDE...!
...IS TO BE USEFUL TO YOU IN SOME WAY...
WHAT I REALLY WANT...
...I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK OF ME AS A BURDEN...
AT THE VERY LEAST...

KÖINZELL, I NEED YOU...

...TO RECOGNIZE ME AS A WARRIOR.

Der Heldmörder
(The Hero-Killer)
VIII
GA
GA (GSW)
SHIT...
THIS FIGHT IS MEANING-LESS...!

I HAVE NO REASON TO KILL THEM...!
I NEED TO GRAB AHT AND STOP THIS FROM ESCALATING ANY FURTHER...
GA
GA
GA
GOSHO

GOTTA SMASH!
DA CLEAP!
BYUD (WHIP)
DO (WHOOM)
!!

!
DA (LEAP)
...HE DODGED THAT TOO...
SO CLOSE !!

ONLY A MATTER OF TIME NOW, DARISTE.
THANKS TO HIS FRIEND'S INTERFERENCE ...
...I'M HAVING NO TROUBLE READING HIS MOVE-MENTS.
.....
SEEMS ...
...HE CAN'T HELP BUT WORRY ABOUT HER...

!?
MY LADY !!
GNNH!!
DON (BOOM)

DOZAZA
(GKSHHH)
TCH!!
BUWA
(WHOOSH)

AHT !!
CRAP. NO GOOD...!
KÖIN-ZELL'S WATCHING .....!!
THIS FIGHT NEEDS TO END!!
FALL BACK, AHT!

LISTEN TO ME.....
AHT !!!

...WITH THIS FANCY FIGHTING OF YOURS...?
AH...
...YOU THINK YOU'LL IMPRESS ME...
I HAVE TO SHOW HIM...
...HOW STRONG I CAN BE...!

!!
GOT YOU!
GWAAH!!
DOKA (SLASH)

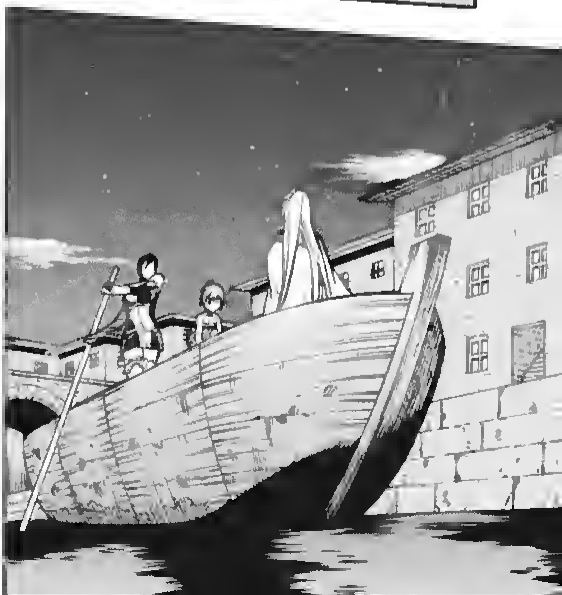
DOSHA CHUU
GARA GARA
GARA
GARA
AHT !!!
!!

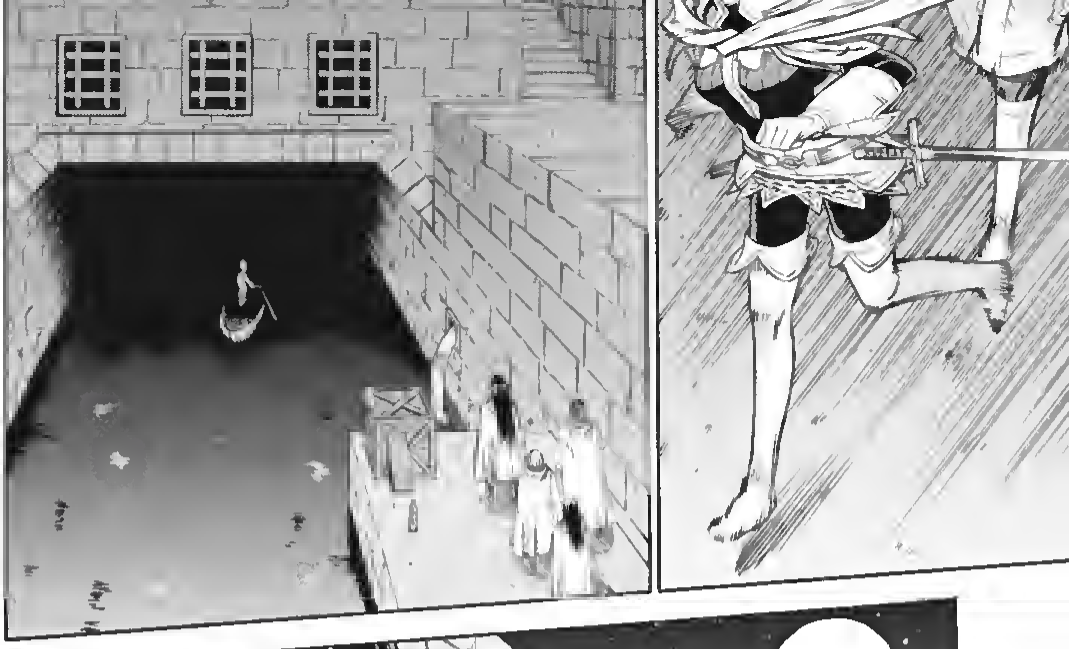
KÖINZELL!!
!?
A
LEAP!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

WAAAAH!
DON (WHUMP)
WHOA!
WHOA!
WHOA...!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
...MORE ALLIES !?

KÖ...
...KÖIN-ZELL... THAT DISGUISE ...!!

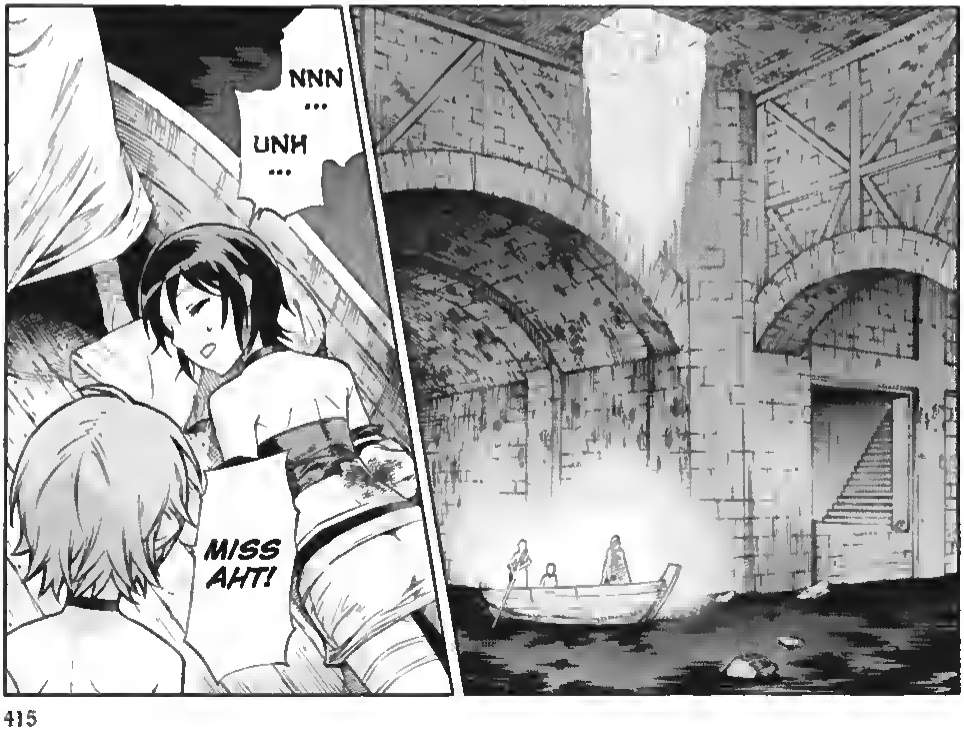




AHH... THEY GOT AWAY.....
NO... NOT FOR LONG!

ELTZEN!
YES.
WE'VE GOT HIS SCENT NOW.
AS LONG AS WE'RE IN THE FREE CITY...
...ANY FURTHER TROOP INCURSIONS AND UNDIGNIFIED ROOF-TOP SCRAMBLES ARE COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE .....

WE NEED TO FIND HIM QUICKLY...
...AND PUT AN END TO ALL OF THIS.....!


NNN ...
UNH ...
MISS AHT!

KÖIN...
ZELL...
.....
...GO HOME...
... AHT.

!!
KÖINZELL...!?
HAVING A NOVICE INTER-FERE IN MY BATTLES ...
...IS ONLY SLOWING ME DOWN!
...KÖIN-ZELL...

...LET ME SEE IF I UNDER-STAND THIS...
GLENN'S PEOPLE TALKED YOU INTO PULLING BACK.....!?
...?
GIRI (GRIP)
THE ELEC-TOR'S DAUGH-TER...?
DAMN YOU... GLENN ...
GLENN ....!!
YES...
BUT... ONE OF THEM WAS ELECTOR RAHN-CLAVE'S DAUGHTER .....

SHIT... GLENN...THAT MASCHINEN-DRACHE FLAGSHIP YOU'RE HAVING THE FREE CITY BUILD YOU...
YOU THINK I'M AFTER IT, DON'T YOU? SO YOU BLOCK MY WAY HOWEVER YOU CAN.....!!
DAMMIT!! THIS IS MY TERRI-TORY!!
THAT FUCK-ING FREE CITY...
FUCK-ING GLENN ...
THEY ALL THINK THEY CAN SCREW ME IN MY OWN TERRI-TORY!!
!!
BAKYA (SNAP)

KABAN CHATTER!
.....THE FREE CITY...
RAZE IT!!

...ZELL...
KOH-ZELL...
HFF!
HUFF
MISS AHT...

Für Meinen Helden (For My Hero)

GOOD THING WE FOUND SOME MEDICINE.
THE WOUND WASN'T DEEP...
...BUT... SHE'LL STILL NEED TO REST FOR ABOUT THREE DAYS.
.....

THIS UNDER-GROUND STOREROOM IS OWNED BY A FORMER SMUGGLER WHO I ONCE HELPED ACROSS.
WE CAN HIDE HERE UNTIL EVERYTHING DIES DOWN.
... NO ...
WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HIDE.

AS LONG I'M IN THIS CITY, THEY'LL SNIFF ME OUT.....

...HAVE QUITE THE REPUTATION.
...THE COMMANDERS AND TROOPS WHO ARE HERE TO CAPTURE YOU...
FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD...

THEY HIDE BEHIND THE PRESTIGE OF THE SEVEN HEROES...
...AND DO TERRIBLE THINGS. ESPECIALLY TO SMALL CLANS IN THE MOUNTAINS.
KÖINZELL .....
...THERE ARE MANY IN THE CITY WHO HAVE TAKEN REFUGE...
...AFTER FLEEING FROM THOSE TROOPS' TYRANNY.
IF THEY WERE TO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SEVEN HEROES... ABOUT WHO YOU ARE...
...THEY MIGHT—
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!
?

IF THE PEOPLE OF THE FREE CITY JOINED ME...
...THEY WOULD BE LABELED AS REBELS. NEIGHBORING LORDS AND THE EMPIRE ITSELF WOULD STRIKE BACK...
THE PROUD FREE CITY OF JULLAS-ABLLAS WOULD...

BUT... AS LONG AS YOU'RE SEEN AS A REBEL...
...YOU'LL ALWAYS BE ALONE ...!!
.....
BUT...
.....

...JULLAS-ABLLAS...
I SEE... AHT...
I UNDER-STAND... WHY YOU WANT TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE SOMEONE YOU SEE AS A HERO.....

THAT MAN.
IF HE KNEW WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO...
...WHAT WOULD HE THINK.....?

SO YOU CROSSED BLADES WITH THE REBEL.
YES...AND DAMAGED A NUMBER OF YOUR CITIZENS' ROOFS IN THE PROCESS.
HE'S GIVING US SOME TROUBLE, BUT IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.
WE WILL BRING DOWN THIS FIEND.
THAT'S ALL I ASK OF YOU.

...IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME A PERSONAL DIGRESSION ...
AS A CHILD, ONE OF MY FAVORITE STORIES...
...WAS ABOUT JULLAS-ABLLAS'S COUNTER-ATTACK DURING THE WAR WITH WISCHTECH.
THE EMPEROR STOOD WITH THE VANGUARD...
...SURROUNDED BY BRAVE WARRIORS.
HE LED THE TEN NEW FLAGSHIPS THAT WERE BUILT IN THIS CITY AND REPELLED THE ENEMY.....!
I FORCED MY FATHER TO TELL ME THAT STORY TIME AFTER TIME.....
MY ONLY REGRET IS THAT I WASN'T BORN DURING THAT AGE.

I WAS ONLY A CHILD AT THE TIME...
YES. THAT BATTLE WAS ONE OF JULLAS-ABLLAS'S SHINING MOMENTS.
I'M SORRY IF THIS SOUNDS INAPPRO-PRIATE...
BUT I'M...
...EXCITED BEYOND BELIEF...!
I'M FIGHTING AN EVIL THAT WOULD DEFY THE EMPIRE AND THREATEN ITS PEOPLE.....
I'VE BEEN GIVEN A CHANCE TO DESTROY HIM HERE.....!!

SO WORRY NOT, MY LORD...
...WE ARE NOT SO NAIVE AS TO CHALLENGE HIM AGAIN...
...WITHOUT A PROPER STRATEGY TO COUNTER THIS ENEMY WHO HAS ALREADY ELUDED US ONCE!

KOIN ...
... ZELL ...?
AHT... YOU'RE A GOOD WARRIOR...
I DON'T DOUBT YOU'LL EVEN GROW STRONGER...
BUT THAT'S WHY...
...I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU KILLED.

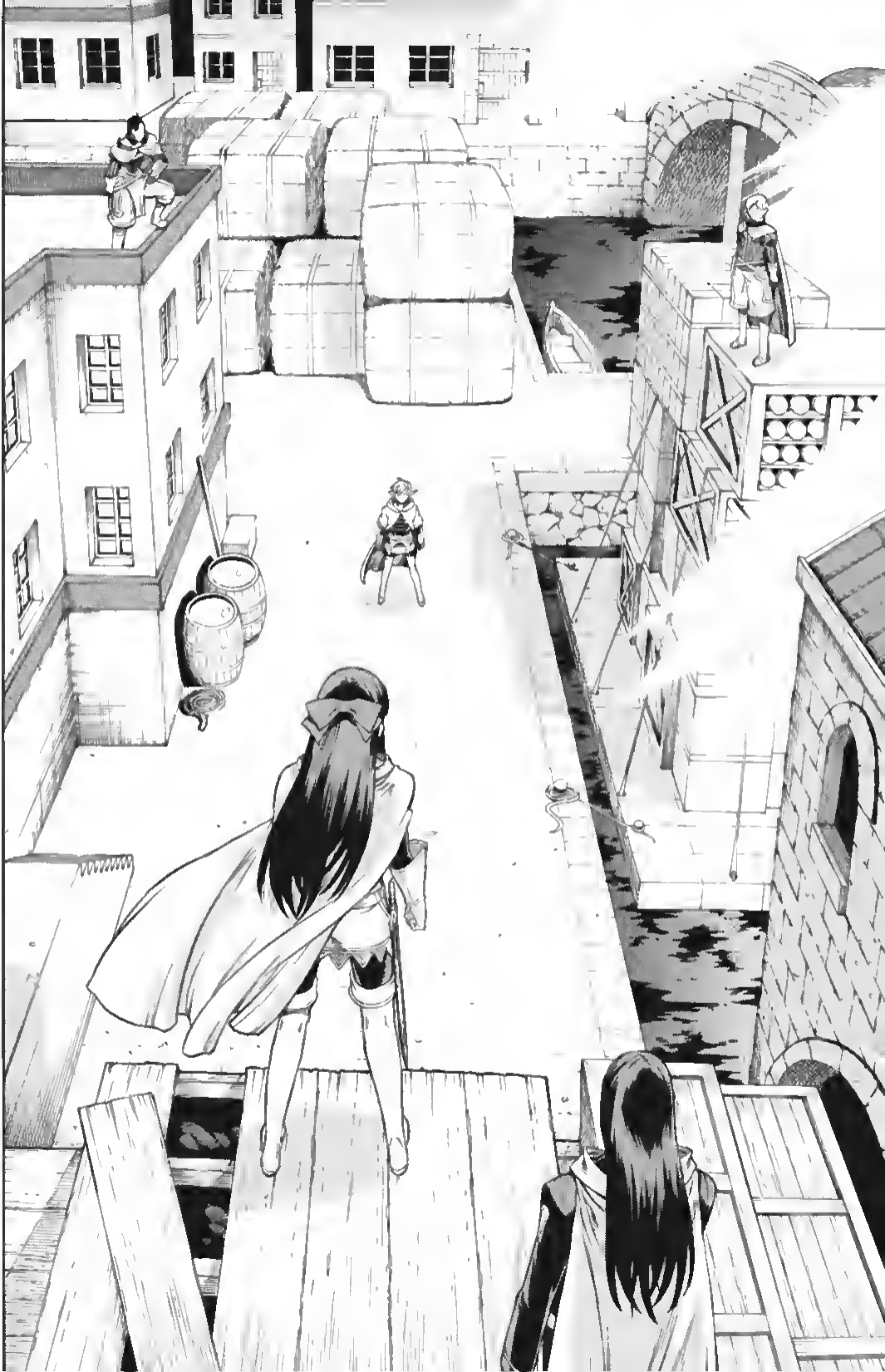
I'M LEAVING THE CITY.
...KOIN-ZELL...
THIS IS GOOD-BYE.
WAIT...
TAKE ME...
WHEN YOU'RE WITH ME...
...YOU AREN'T FOCUSED ON WATCHING THE ENEMY. YOU CAN'T FIGHT PROPERLY.
TAKE ME WITH YOU.....!

I WANTED...
...TO WATCH THAT GIRL GROW STRONGER. I REALLY DID.....
I WON-DER...

...WOULD I HAVE BEEN AT THAT SCHOOL NOW...
...TRAINING CHILDREN LIKE AHT IN SWORDS-MANSHIP .....?
GRR (GRIND)
...DON'T BE STUPID ...!!

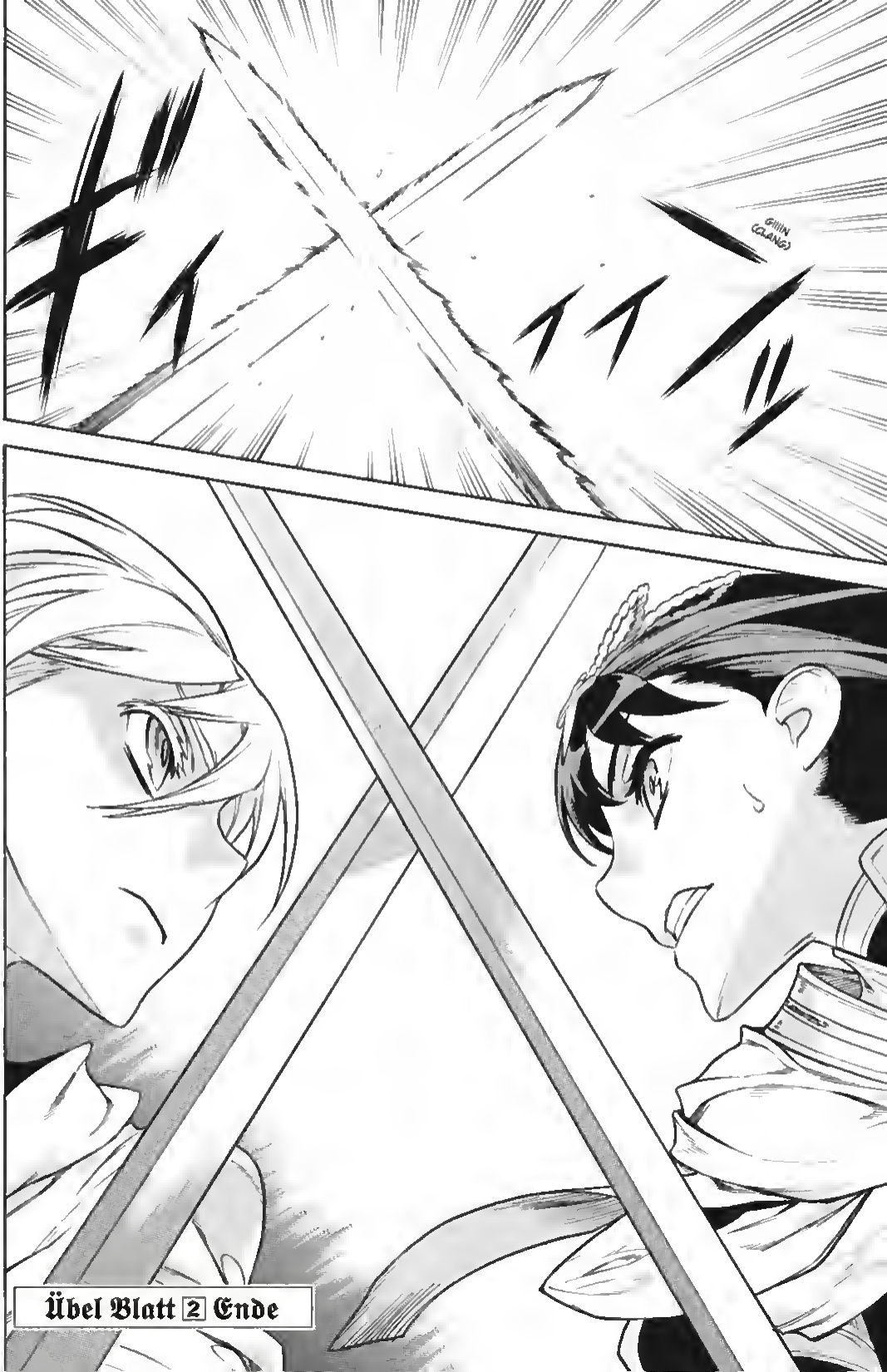
WHAT GOOD IS IT TO FANTA-SIZE...?
ANY FUTURE I MIGHT HAVE HAD WAS TORN APART...
...IN THE FOREST OF DEATH ON THAT DAY TWENTY YEARS AGO.
IT'S GONE FOREVER .....!!

WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...!



OF COURSE...
I CAN'T AVOID A FIGHT...
JUST AS DARISTE PREDICTED ...
FOOL-ISH...!
YOU HONESTLY THOUGHT YOU COULD HIDE YOUR SCENT HERE...
...JUST BECAUSE THIS IS A REGION WITH MANY OTHER DEMI-HUMANS!?
HOW VERY FOOLISH ...!

THIS IS THE LAST DAY THAT YOU WILL WALK UPON THIS EARTH.....
...STEEPED IN SIN AND SOAKED IN BLOOD AS YOU ARE!

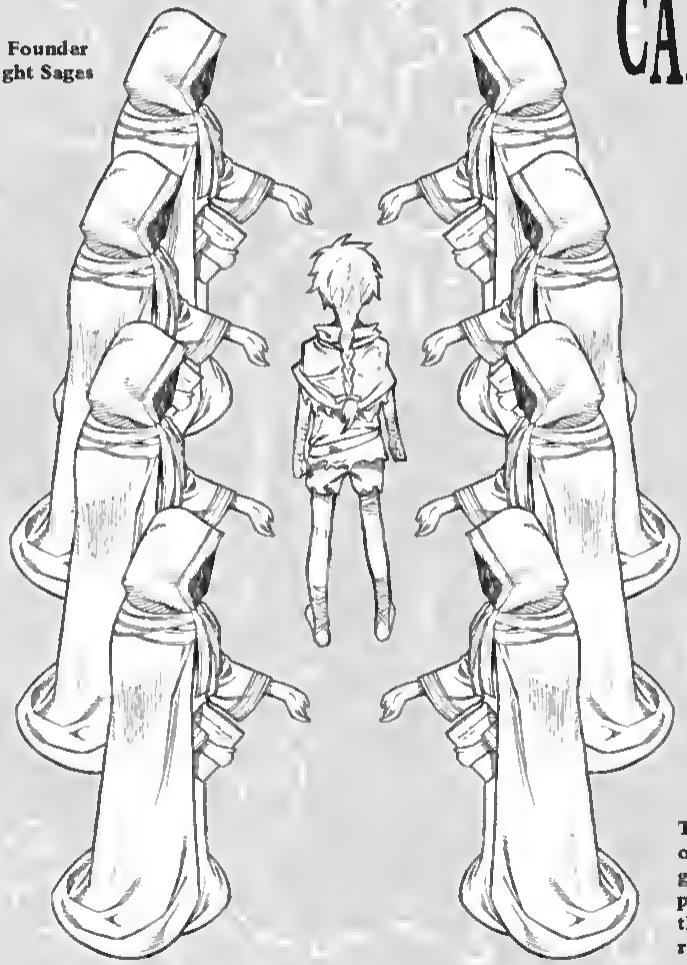


Übel Blatt 2 Ende

THE ANNO DONATIO CALENDAR

The gods granted the earth to the Great Founder, marking the start of Szaalenden's calendar. It is known to the people as The Anno Donetio Calendar.

The eight sages were ordered by the gods to groom the Great Founder into a noble ruler. Those seges and the scholars who succeeded them would also record the land's history in detail for future generations. Close to 4,000 yeers' worth of the empire's history is recorded and preserved in the capital's achives.



The Great Founder and the Eight Sages

The eight mighty gods of that ancient age grented the eight sages prodigious wisdom so that the sages might rule the land properly and enlighten the Great Founder.

ELECTORS

There was a time when emperors of the Szealent Empire were chosen from those of the Great Founder's bloodline.

However, around 800 A.D., a series of civil wars spanning several decades claimed the lives of all potential candidates. In the end, every descendent of the Great Founder was killed, ending the line.

The empire plunged into an era of full-blown war as lower lords competed for the seat of emperor. Already on the verge of ruin, the empire was invaded for the first time by Wischtech, the Land of Shadows.

In 974 A.D., in an attempt to stave off the Wischtech invasion, the elders in the capital consulted with four powerful lords and elected Litranos—the young, capable king of the small kingdom of Hardo-Archhehennes who had been studying in the capital—as emperor.

It is said that Emperor Litranos I possessed a certain affability and charm that allowed him to readily make allies of enemies. Even those lesser lords who initially refused to accept his rule all had sudden changes of heart after simply meeting and speaking with the emperor, at which point they quickly agreed to aid in the military effort.

What's more, many among the people believed Litranos I was actually a reincarnation of the Great Founder, given that the founder too had been born within Hardo-Archhehannes on Mount Arachhaan.

In the age that followed, countless pretenders emerged, claiming to be of Litranos's bloodline and therefore rightful heirs to the throne. These would-be emperors started a number of rebellions under such pretexts.

In 980 A.D., after the first threat from Wischtech had been overcome, Emperor Litranos I created an "elector"-based system to select future emperors in an effort to preserve harmony in the empire.

Patterned after the eight sages who reared the Great Founder, the elector council began with eight members: the four lords who had selected Litranos along with four others of the emperor's choosing.

Although civil war and future attacks by Wischtech would be responsible for ending several of the elector family lines throughout the ages, new electors stepped in to fill the positions, ensuring that, for the next 3,000 years, emperors would always be elected by a council of eight.

The eight current elector families are Rahncleve, Ehenos, Bechremert, Kum-Zeirenkroel, Ikum-Zeirankrsel, Iri, Gelkrald, and Bados-Hedis.

Owing to the heavy responsibility placed on these families, their children are not only given the finest education but also have little freedom when it comes to their life choices and marriages, even when compared to the children of other nobles.

No small number of these children resent these restrictions, and many leave their families in order to pursue greater freedom.

Litranos I

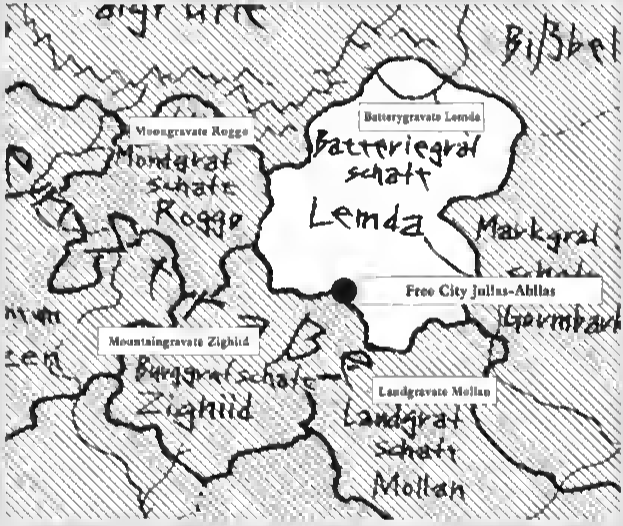
Jullas-Abllas is located on the southern tip of Batterygravate Lemda and is recognized as politically autonomous by the emperor.

The city has long flourished as a place of commerce and a haven for merchants and craftsmen. As such, nearby lords have often attacked, competing for control of the city.

In 3324 A.D., Lemda, Roggo, and Zighiid fell under control of an alliance of lords loyal to Wischtech, but Jullas-Abllas alone stood apart, claiming loyalty to the empire. In recognition of this loyalty, the emperor at the time granted the city its independence.

JULLAS-ABLLAS

Olgiaaf



The first dragon airship prototype was invented in 3600 A.D., leading the craftsmen of Jullas-Abllas to open a number of workshops where they competed to improve on the airship's design.

In 3645 A.D., a genius technician named Olgiaaf from the artisan district of Jullas-Abllas discovered a method to mine dragon stones—once harvested from the gullets of wild dragons—directly from sources in the earth.

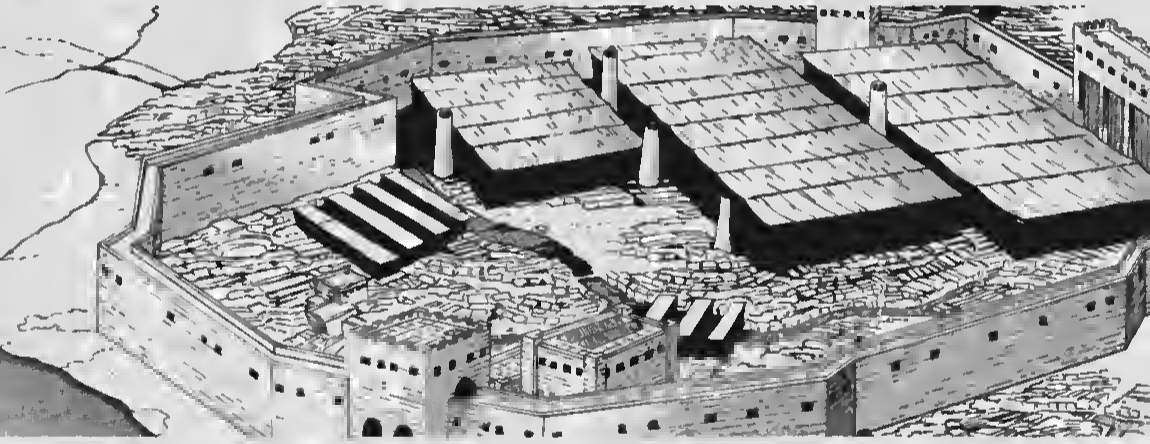
Olgiaaf was also responsible for advancements in the speed and size of dragon airships. These and other rapid developments in maschinendrache design were responsible for bringing an age of unmatched prosperity to Jullas-Abllas.

FREE CITY

However, an invasion by Wischtech in 3670 A.D. was responsible for both the partial destruction of the city and the death of the genius Olgiaaf. The great war lasted over fifty years, effectively putting a stop to advancements in airship technology and the development of the city.

The next 200 years saw little progress for Jullas-Ahllas, but in an ironic twist, it was the next invasion by Wischtech and the ensuing war that brought about a tremendous opportunity for growth.

The results of Sage Haagan's research of Wischtech's magic artillery led to new advancements in dragon airship design, as Emperor Largor III commissioned the building of ten giant maschinendrache motherships in Jullas-Ahllas. The emperor then used them to launch a massive counteroffensive.



Sage Haagan was not originally acquainted with airship design. While conducting research in the free city's library, however, he discovered a large number of blueprints left behind by Olgiaaf, who had envisioned using the ships to counter Wischtech.

Restrictions placed on dragon airship construction by the capital following the war kept the city from further expansion, but commerce flourished thanks to an influx of merchants and artisans from other territories. With the largest maschinendrache shipyard in the empire, the city continues to stoke the secret ambitions of local lords who covet its prestige.

Translation Notes

Title:
Ubel Blatt translates to "evil/sinister blade" in German.

Page 163:
Geranpen may have eventually heen promoted to "centurion" (leader of one hundred men), but he began his career commanding only ten soldiers as a "decurion." Still higher up is Fargo, who, as a "chiliarch," commanded one thousand soldiers.

Page 229:
Szaalenden is the physical land granted to the founder hy the gods of old. Szaalent is the empire ruling over that land. Szaalion is tbe empire's capital city.

Page 304:
The electors mentioned in the story and descrihed in the appendix have a real hasis in history. Also known as prince-electors or *kurfurst*, they were responsible for electing emperors in the Holy Roman Empire.

Libellaff

ÜBEL BLATT ❷

Etorouji Shiono

Translation: Caleb D. Cook • Lettering: Abigail Blackman

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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